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HOW TO AVOID WORK

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By 

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HOW TO AVOID WORK

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This Book is Dedicated
With Affection and Deep Respect
To All Those Who Hate Work

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PREFACE

WHEN AN ARTICLE ENTITLED "HOW TO AVOID WORK" recently appeared under my name in the *American Magazine*, I soon found out that many reputable people are interested in this intriguing subject.

Thousands of letters poured in asking for more information—some from such far places as the other side of the world, Japan and India.

The *Reader's Digest* reprinted the article and featured it in their newspaper advertising from coast to coast as the leading article in that particular issue. Newspaper writers seemed to enjoy discussing the idea and one movie columnist wrote, "The *Reader's Digest* is selling out in Hollywood at every stand because of the article How to Avoid Work." Invitations for guest radio appearances came in from all the leading networks and right after a guest appearance on a leading television show, motion picture representatives said, "We'll have you on film in no time at all."

Avoiding work is something which has fascinated me ever since I was a mere broth of a boy. In fact, I've made a profitable career out of avoiding work. And, as a profes-

PREFACE

sional career consultant, I've shown thousands of others how they can avoid work, too.

This book is written for everyone who wishes to avoid work.

September, 1948

W. J. R.

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HOW TO AVOID WORK

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CHAPTER I



WHAT IS WORK?

MOST AMERICANS HAVE THE RIDICULOUS NOTION THAT anything they do which produces an income is work—and that anything they do outside “working” hours is play. There is no logic to that.

I have a friend who is a locomotive engineer. I know he loves the feeling of masterfulness and responsibility that comes over him when he gets behind the throttle and blows that whistle.

But when he comes into his house on a typical night his wife is apt to say, “George, the Carlburgs want us to come over and play bridge tonight.”

Suddenly George feels all fagged out. He mutters irritably, “Have we got to go? I’ve had a hard day. You know I don’t like bridge and play it miserably. Besides, Willard is such an old windbag.”

Now, to George, playing bridge at the Carlburgs’ is the purest kind of work, infinitely more exhausting and harassing than his activities at the throttle. And he is right.

As we define work in career counseling, it is doing something you don’t enjoy doing. You may not enjoy it simply because it bores you, or because you don’t have

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the knack of doing it, or because you have to be with people you don't like. Whatever the reason, you just don't like it. So it is work, even if it's playing bridge at the Carlburgs'.

How many Americans are there who don't enjoy their jobs? All of my studies indicate that a decided majority are dissatisfied and wish they were doing something else. Imagine how much frustration all this vocational maladjustment is causing! No wonder so many people are irritable nowadays.

What about yourself? Is your job work or fun? If it is work, then you would probably be wise to take immediate steps to get out of it. Your life is too short and too valuable to fritter away in work.

If you don't get out now, you may end up like the frog that is placed in a pot of fresh water on the stove. As the temperature is gradually increased, the frog feels restless and uncomfortable, but not uncomfortable enough to jump out. Without being aware that a change is taking place, he is gradually lulled into unconsciousness—boiled.

Much the same thing happens when you take a person and put him in a job which he does not like. He gets irritable in his groove. His duties soon become a monotonous routine that slowly dulls his senses. As I walk into offices, through factories and stores, I often find myself looking into the expressionless faces of people going

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through mechanical motions. They are people whose minds are stunned and slowly dying.

I see accountants who wish they were teachers or explorers, and salesmen who wish they were cabinetmakers. I recently talked with the son of a wealthy lawyer who was grimly studying law. He said, "Oh, I'll plow through these courses somehow." Deep in his heart, he wants to be a geologist, but of course, he said, he couldn't disappoint Dad.

When a person is in a job he dislikes, he reacts by being moody and nervous. He becomes tired easily and is a victim of indigestion and insomnia. As he continues to feel frustrated, he becomes rebellious, figuratively kicks at people, grows sour on the world. Yes, forcing yourself to work at a job you dislike is like wearing a lead vest to run a race—it's just plain exhausting.

Most people think that once you get started in a certain field, you can't very well change. This is sheer nonsense.

As we shall see, in later chapters, no matter who you are, what you've been doing, or how old you are, you can change to a job environment more agreeable to your nature. There is no such thing as a one-and-only career for anyone. Frequently there are several possible careers open to you that will be equally satisfying. It is only when you get caught in a job that is wholly alien to your nature that you develop ulcers and a nervous breakdown.

Life really begins when you have discovered that you

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can do anything you want. Amelia Earhart expressed it well when she wrote:¹

I flew the Atlantic because I wanted to. If that be what they call 'a woman's reason,' make the most of it. It isn't, I think, a reason to be apologized for by man or woman. . . .

Whether you are flying the Atlantic or selling sausages or building a skyscraper or driving a truck, your greatest power comes from the fact that you want tremendously to do that very thing, and do it well.

Actually, there is only one way in this world to achieve true happiness, and that is to express yourself with all your skill and enthusiasm in a career that appeals to you more than any other. In such a career, you feel a sense of purpose, a sense of achievement. You feel you are making a contribution. It is not work.

A doctor who has felt the pulse of life and the still of death does not feel he is working when he must leave a party to deliver a baby.

A farmer who owns his own land is not working when he labors fifteen hours a day to get in a crop.

A carpenter is not working when he builds a cottage he is proud of.

A natural-born politician is not working when he spends sixteen hours a day stumping a county for votes.

A mother is not working when she cleans the house so that she can give her daughter a surprise party. As one

¹ "Flying the Atlantic," by Amelia Earhart, *The American Magazine*, August 1932, p. 15.

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mother said, as she stood over a steaming tub washing her baby's diapers, "Whatever we do for those we love is never work. I'm proud of my little family. Not a one of them has ever been any trouble to me. It's been fun."

All of us are much more creative than we suspect. A mechanic is creative when he figures a way to construct a more efficient monkey wrench. A department head is unconsciously acknowledging his creativeness when he points with pride to one of his best salesmen and says, "Why, when I got hold of Eddie he was nothing but a bum!" A mother who goes in for interior decoration and a housewife who paints in oils in her spare time, are creative when they add touches of individuality and of beauty to their homes.

To my mind, the world would be a much pleasanter and more civilized place to live in, if everyone resolved to pursue whatever is closest to his heart's desire. We would be more creative and our productivity would be vastly increased.

Altogether too much emphasis, I think, has been placed on what we *ought* to do, rather than what we *want* to do.

To some people, doing what you want to do seems almost sinful. But, believe me, it is not sinful. It is not selfish. It is not something a person should feel guilty about. If your life is important, why waste it in disagreeable work that has no meaning to you?

The greatest satisfaction you can obtain from life is

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your pleasure in producing, in your own individual way, something of value for your fellowmen. That is creative living!

When we consider that each of us has only one *life* to live, isn't it rather tragic to find men and women, with brains capable of comprehending the stars and the planets, talking about the weather; men and women, with hands capable of creating works of art, using those hands only for routine tasks; men and women, capable of independent thought, using their minds as a bowling-alley for popular ideas; men and women, capable of greatness, wallowing in mediocrity; men and women, capable of self-expression, slowly dying a mental death while they babble the confused monotone of the mob?

For you, life can be a succession of glorious adventures. Or it can be a monotonous bore.

Take your choice!



CHAPTER II



YOU CAN AVOID WORK!

YOU CAN AVOID WORK. YOU CAN DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO.

What makes me so sure?

It's because I've seen so many men and women do it. And I know exactly how it's done.

Bearing in mind that work is doing something you do not want to do, it becomes perfectly apparent that your first step in avoiding work is to find out what you *do* want to do—what interests you most, what you can get really enthusiastic about.

What Do You Want to Do?

Naturally, men and career women are most interested in getting the answer to this simple question. The young girl who plans to be married or the woman who is raising a family is inclined to think that her "career" as a homemaker is "all cut out for her." But this just isn't so.

Many women who plan to be married, never do get married, and they have the same problem of choosing a career as men have. Most women who do marry, take some kind of job when they leave school and many continue to hold a full-time job several years after they are

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married. Many a married woman finds it necessary to add to the family income and sometimes the death or sickness of a husband forces her into the role of the main "breadwinner." Even if she's not forced, by financial circumstances, to contribute to the family income, any married woman needs some stimulating "outside" interest, some hobby, that challenges her native abilities to the utmost. Otherwise, she's bound to get into a rut running a home. And, finally, after her family is raised, a woman with nothing to do is likely to make a nuisance of herself interfering with the lives of her children. But, as we shall see, a stimulating job interest in the later years gives her a new and attractive personality.

So that this question of what you really want to do, is one that should be of real interest to all men and all women.

Just how far you go right now toward a final answer to this question, is likely to depend largely on your age and experience.

If you are a high-school student and do not have any dominant desire, as yet, to get into some specific field, I wouldn't try to answer this question too fast, if I were you. Keep your mind open. Talk with your teachers. Talk with the vocational guidance director, if there's one in your school. Ask the local librarian for information about various fields. In this way, you'll at least get a general idea of those which interest you most. This will

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help you to decide whether you ought to go to college and, if so, what kind of college. You'll find out whether you ought to go out and get a job, and, if so, what kind of job is indicated.

If you're in college, you ought to have some pretty definite ideas of the *general* field you wish to enter—business, law, medicine, government service, agriculture, engineering, science, teaching, religion, art, social service, music, drama, writing, psychology, etc. And you should be giving some thought to the possibility of graduate work in your field, if you have some subdivision of the field you'd like to explore further, and if you feel that a master's degree or a doctor's degree is necessary for the high attainment you desire. On the other hand, if you feel that junior college or a bachelor's degree is enough, you should be giving some thought to the kind of job you want when you get out of school.

However, if you are a man with family responsibilities, or if you are a career woman who is already employed, you have the immediate problem of planning your career so that you can make the most pleasant and the most profitable use of your special abilities.

If you are a mother of young children, you probably have your hands pretty full right now, but you can begin to think about what you would like to go into as a hobby interest to begin with and as a job interest if your family needs the help.

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And if you are an older man or woman, you have the immediate problem of finding an agreeable place of usefulness.

But no matter what your age or condition or experience, the sooner you find out what you really want to do and do it the better, for that's the only way anyone can avoid work.

You may have in mind some definite line you would like to follow. Most people do. If you don't, it will be necessary for you to do some systematic "digging" until you strike some provisional fields that capture your interest.

Try this approach. Suppose you were financially independent and were perfectly free to do anything you wanted, what would you do, if anything?

If your inclinations are at all definite, the answer to this simple question provides at least a general definition of the field which you would enjoy most.

And let's get this straight. You can't just say "I wouldn't do anything." For doing nothing is the worst kind of work—as anyone who has ever tried to retire will tell you.

Perhaps you may think that you haven't the slightest idea of what you would do. But I have talked with a great many people who have told me just that. And I have found that every one of them had at least a faint leaning in some direction or another and that this inclination came to the surface as soon as they began to review their ex-

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periences and what they liked and disliked about these experiences.

Dr. Catherine Cox Miles studied the childhood of some three hundred great men and found that in a large share of the cases these men had achieved greatness in work that grew out of childhood hobbies. Consequently, a review of your childhood hobbies may furnish a clue.

Sometimes a person can get an interesting lead by reviewing what studies he liked best at school and what outside activities in school or in community life were enjoyed most.

Perhaps you have at some time during your life built or invented or written or created something original that particularly pleased you and that you considered to be your very own.

It may be helpful for you to review what jobs you have held, what your duties consisted of, whether you were really interested in any of these jobs. If there is nothing appealing about any jobs you have held, or if you have very little job experience to fall back on, you may find it helpful to recall, as best you can, all the vocations you have ever thought of, from the very first down to date.

Briefly then, I'd suggest that you spend one hour a day absolutely alone for the next ten days, reviewing your childhood hobbies, your favorite studies, your school and community activities, the various jobs you have held, the history of your vocational inclinations. Then, if you will expose yourself in reading and in personal contacts to

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various fields of human activity, in an attempt to make some selection of a general field which you would enjoy, I am certain that you will soon acquire some pretty definite ideas of what you would like to do.

Once you know what general field interests you most—whether you've had to dig it out or whether you already knew it—you're ready to look into the various kinds of jobs to be done in this field and to find out which ones appeal to you most.

"Yeah . . . but wait a minute," you say. "Suppose I do go ahead and find out what kind of a job *appeals* to me most. So what? You don't mean to tell me that I can have any job I want just because it *appeals* to me, do you?"

As one young insurance salesman told me, "I'm interested in criminology. I'd like to be a detective. Or a lawyer. Or even a judge. But you just don't up and be a judge. My wife thinks I'm crazy to waste time even thinking about such things. As she says, 'It's too late now, me married with two kids.' Sure, selling insurance is a lousy way to make a living, but we're eating."

So, if, for any reason at all, you are wondering right now how on earth you could ever do the thing that appeals to you most, I'll say to you the same thing I said to this insurance salesman, "Keep your shirt on."

The first step in avoiding work is to decide what you want to do. Most of us, contemplating our chosen field, are discouraged at the very outset when we begin thinking of all the difficulties involved in the second and the third

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and the fourth step in our program. We permit our minds to become swamped with a maze of problems which cannot be solved all at once. Consequently we lose hope before we even get started.

However, if we undertake one step at a time, we find that the solution to each step is easy to arrive at.

So let's not worry just yet about *how* you'll reach the goal you're after or *how* you'll hurdle the difficulties which stand in your way. That comes later. We'll deal with that fully and completely in the chapters that follow.

If you're not sure about the kind of job you want, go to your local library and look up the authoritative literature which describes the various kinds of jobs to be done in your general field of interest. The librarian will be glad to help you.

As soon as you get a line on the kind of job which appeals to you most, correspond with, or, if you possibly can, talk with, leaders in your chosen field and with practical workers in the jobs which appeal to you. Find out as much as you can about each of these jobs—the basic abilities, relations with other people, required education and experience, and the approximate pay range in each job. Build up a list of points for and against each job, from *your* point of view, as you go along. Most leaders and practical workers in any field feel highly complimented when asked for such information.

No matter what your general field of interest, you'll find that there are many subdivisions of the field.

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I am thinking of two young men who were interested in geology. One now specializes in Egyptology; the other in designing surface instruments for the detection of oil deposits.

Two others whose original interests were in the general field of law are now quite far apart; one specializes in defending allergy suits for leading manufacturers of beauty products and the other concentrates on bankruptcy and receivership cases.

A men's clothing salesman, fed up with his job but interested in physical education, now specializes in the sale of athletic equipment appropriate for high-school students.

Of three young women who wanted to write, one specializes in interviewing famous people, one writes children's stories, one prepares publicity articles for household products.

It's always a good idea to be on the lookout for jobs which promise to become more important in the immediate years ahead. You might even stake out a new claim for yourself in one small subdivision of your field in which little or nothing has been done and in which you may excel.

I'm thinking of a young man who became interested in marketing—one of the oldest fields known to man. The first time two men ever met on this earth, each probably traded something that he had for something that he

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wanted. There are a great many divisions of marketing, such as advertising, selling, merchandising, transporting, designing products, studying present and potential markets, and there are a great many subdivisions of each of these—all of which have been pretty well worked over. Yet by specializing in one small subdivision of the study of consumer markets, in which little had been done, (the technique of gathering dependable, first-hand information in personal interviews with consumers), this young man, within a few years, achieved an authoritative position in that field with an income that ran high in five figures.

Another young man interested in the general field of retailing, found, in his talks with some department store owners, that there were unsolved problems in the credit departments of these stores that interested him. He began specializing in the retail credit field and about a year later he confined his efforts to the field of community credit systems. Within three years he had written several monographs on credit problems and was appointed Secretary-Manager of the Retail Credit Men's Association in one of the most influential states of the Union. A few years later he was appointed to an important post in a national credit association.

Some time ago, I met a high-school teacher whose early interest in the general field of nutrition led to her present specialization in the study of student meals. For several

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years now, she has been attending summer sessions at one of our larger universities. During the regular school year, she's head dietitian at a leading Midwest college.

These people are getting somewhere fast because they are digging up new ground. They have not thrown themselves into circumstances where the chances of discovering anything new are negligible. They are not wasting their efforts in an impossible fight with thousands of others in a field that is already thoroughly worked over.

There are literally thousands of fields untouched—waiting to be explored—waiting to be opened by the inquiring mind. The only reason why we hear so little of them is that most of us act like sheep, saying, "I think I'll go into business," or "I think I'll go into social service," or "I think I'll go into law," or "I think I'll study engineering," or "I think I'll go into medicine." We simply follow a beaten path and go into some general field without realizing that every one of these general vocations has many divisions, and a great many more subdivisions requiring various kinds of abilities and leading to widely separated destinations. Instead of seeking some suitable subdivision of a selected field that is comparatively new, we blindly throw ourselves into open competition with thousands of others and finally settle down wherever we happen to be thrown in the struggle.

In selecting our job, most of us behave as if we had no intelligence or imagination whatsoever. You, or anyone

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else who can read, can look over the authoritative literature in any field and find there a statement of what is needed in that field. You, or anyone else who can write, can communicate with leaders in any field who will be very glad to tell you some of the unsolved problems that lend themselves to specialized attention and study.

If you can stake out an entirely new claim that has never been worked, that is ideal. Then, whatever you do will be new. It may be a fit subject for publication. And you will be able quickly to achieve an authoritative position within your own little bailiwick.

Do You Have the Basic Abilities Required?

As a rule, a person's natural abilities point in the same direction as his likes and dislikes. In other words, he usually has the basic abilities to support the kind of job he's most enthusiastic about.

But it's a good idea to play safe and double-check. For if a fellow wants to be a great opera singer and he hasn't got the "pipes," he'd better forget it.

The important point is not to confuse *basic ability* with *training*. Lawrence Tibbett, Metropolitan star, failed to make the high-school glee club. But that did not mean Tibbett did not have the *ability* to become a great singer. It simply meant that his voice at that time was *untrained* and undeveloped.

Another thing to recognize is that we sometimes misin-

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interpret our past experience. A young man in Pittsburgh told me "I'd like to go into selling, but I know I can't sell." Then he went on to tell me of a previous experience in selling at which he had failed. When I analyzed this experience, I found that he had had a job at one time attempting to sell a household appliance from door-to-door (which he didn't believe in), that he had received no systematic training for the job, and that he had been "canned" by a district supervisor who told him that he "didn't have the gift of gab."

Today this same man, after a couple of years of intelligent training on the sales staff of an organization that manufactures machinery and mill supplies, has recently been made a district sales manager.

A "misfit" son of a plumber just out of high school told me, "There is nothing in the world I'd rather do than write. But my stuff's no good."

In his senior year he had barely passed his English course largely because of a "run-in" he had with the instructor who indignantly branded some of his voluntary compositions as radical, dangerous, and sacrilegious. As a matter of fact, the boy had considerable natural writing ability. True, he lacked diplomacy. But he had imagination and he had fresh ideas. I told this young man that this previous experience of his did not prove that his stuff was no good or that he couldn't write. What he really needed was sympathetic training and a lot of it, and I

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recommended a school of journalism where he could get it.

Here's another thought that will help you immeasurably in finding out whether or not you have the required ability for a specific job. In every business, art, trade, or profession, there are four major jobs to be done:

1. Creative—inventing, discovering, or developing new ideas
2. Administrative—making plans and policies for the conduct and supervision of the entire business or project
3. Executive—directing the work of others in actually carrying out plans and policies in one or more departments or sections
4. Line—performing some individual routine task involving no responsibility for the work of others

If you have creative ability, you know it without anybody telling you. Your creative talents have demanded expression in your early youth. If there is any doubt in your mind as to whether you have the ability to invent or to discover or to develop new ideas, you probably do not have this ability. And even if you think you have it, if you have never built or invented or written or created anything original that particularly pleased you and that you considered to be your very own, you probably do not have creative ability.

If you are a thoughtful person, slow to act, who enjoys

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analyzing, interpreting, and patiently summarizing the results of the activities of others; if you're the kind of person who likes to pry into every single phase of an operation and to view a business as a whole; if you get a big kick out of cautiously defining long-range plans and policies; if you're strong on logic, you have the most important earmarks of an able administrator.

But if you like plenty of action, if you love to organize and direct other people as they carry out plans and policies, and if you're perfectly content to confine your activities to one department of a business, you'd probably make a first-rate executive.

Of course, you know as well as I do, that there are many people who do not have creative ability or administrative ability and who have no desire to assume executive responsibility for the work of others—people who are perfectly fascinated with a routine task which permits their mind to wander and which doesn't worry them at night. And the best way for them to avoid work is to find the kind of a routine task that fascinates them.

While it is true that a person can possess more than one of these four kinds of abilities, in most instances a person is *best* able to perform either a creative or an administrative or an executive or a line function. Many an able salesman has ruined himself trying to be a sales manager; many an able mechanic has failed trying to be a foreman; and many an able executive has gotten ulcers trying to be a business administrator.

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Another important point to check in considering your ability to do any job, is the tempo required on the job. Some jobs demand that a person follow a fast pace and unless you're geared to such a pace, you'll probably crack up.

Recently I counseled a young newspaper man who was so nervous he sobbed during the interview. He had gone into newspaper work because he did have definite writing abilities. But he soon hated his work. A further examination of his writing abilities revealed that, while it was true he could write, he was best when he had plenty of time to write thoughtfully. He wrote at a slow tempo. The fast newspaper pace distressed him. He was more the "student" type.

I persuaded him to quit his job and take a teaching job in a New England boys' school. Now he writes in his leisure hours. In three years he has turned out two successful books. Now, he tells me, he is soaring around the treetops. He feels whole and adequate for the first time in his life.

You can easily find out what abilities are required on any job and then see whether or not you've got what it takes. You will recall the insurance salesman I mentioned who was interested in criminology and who thought he might like to be a detective or a lawyer or even a judge. This young man, whom we'll call Thomas Arnold, had no immediate hope of getting out of the insurance business, but he did agree to inquire into the field of criminology a

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little further. First he talked with the chief of the local detective force and secured from him a full understanding of the nature of the job and the assignments which are given out. He found that some of these assignments interested him and that some of them were downright distasteful. His general reaction was that he didn't think he'd like the idea of spending the rest of his life being a "snooper." He also inquired into the preparation necessary to become a detective and found that it might be possible to get on the detective force within two or three years providing he were willing to start out as a uniformed policeman.

Arnold called on the registrar of the local university, submitted his scholastic credits, and learned that he might reasonably expect to finish his preparation for the bar examination, through part-time study, in about five years. He talked with two outstanding criminal lawyers and was very much impressed with the fact that a lawyer is able to select his own cases. Cases involving young men seemed to challenge and interest him most. One of these attorneys invited him to sit in on an actual trial and he was thrilled with the prospect of pleading a case in a courtroom, and immediately sensed that this would permit him to make full use of, and further develop, his natural ability as a public speaker. He liked the professional atmosphere.

At the same time, recognizing that he had a family to support, he could see that there were immediate financial problems involved in following the study of law.

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Through these attorneys, Arnold was able to meet two criminal court judges. From them he learned that the judgeship involves an extended period of preparation. But more important than that, the job of judge did not seem to appeal to Arnold as much as that of the attorney, for the simple reason that he thrilled more at a fight than he did at the prospect of exercising calm, impartial judgments on cases without taking sides. Then too, he found that a judge has very little control over the selection of only those cases which involve young men, and these were the ones that seemed to attract Arnold most.

We shall see later how Arnold weighed the advantages and the disadvantages of each of these jobs and arrived at his selection.

Would You Enjoy the Human Relations Involved on the Job?

On some jobs, a person's alone much of the time; on others, he's rubbing shoulders with people from morning till night. In some jobs, you must go out and take the initiative in meeting people; in others, people come to you. Some jobs require that you actively and aggressively persuade others to your point of view; some don't. Some jobs put you in a professional atmosphere, some in an artistic environment, some in a rough-and-tumble, highly competitive, trade or business.

In any job you're considering, it's a good idea to antic-

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ipate what kind of a human relations environment it provides, so that you can decide in advance whether or not it promises to suit your tastes.

Often, success or failure turns on this question of human relations. Some months ago I counseled the business manager of a firm manufacturing package goods. He squirmed in his chair, talked of vague aches and pains; he was not only approaching a nervous collapse, but his wife was threatening to leave him.

Our diagnosis was that in his package-goods business, he was spending practically all of his time on the inside dealing with *things*, whereas his yearnings were to deal more with *people*. He had humanitarian impulses that were being frustrated on his present job.

Now, after all, he had proved his ability as a business manager. So my recommendation was simply that he stay in the field of business management but find a job where he could more directly serve people. We talked over possibilities. A month later, he wrote me that he had just gotten a job as business manager of a hospital and that he was more enthusiastic than he had ever been in his life—felt a lot better, too.

Another man who was in a bad way mentally was in the production department of an advertising agency. He felt inadequate and out of place. He was, for that job. He had strong technical ability, but the production department atmosphere was stifling him. He was highly compet-

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itive in his human relations. He wanted to "meet new people." He liked to be with men and women who are interested in marketing and sales.

When we added up his desires and talents, it seemed obvious that he might make a crackerjack salesman for some technical line. I encouraged him to apply for a sales job with a leading publisher of trade magazines. He got the job, is making much more money than he ever made before, and he's exuberantly happy.

Any time you do not enjoy the human relations involved on any job, sooner or later that job's bound to be work, not fun.

Selecting Your Career

After you have decided what jobs you could get enthusiastic about, after you have checked up to find out whether you have the basic abilities required, and have satisfied yourself that you would enjoy the human relations involved, then you're ready to select the career that's best for you—the one that's fun, not work.

The simplest way to do this is to set up a balance sheet for each job being considered, using whatever information you have been able to find out about the job. In setting up your balance sheet, just draw a line down the center of a piece of paper, write the name of the job at the top, and state the advantages of the job on the right-hand side and the disadvantages on the left. After having studied

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the relative advantages and disadvantages of each job, as presented on these balance sheets, you are able to arrive at the best solution.

There are real reasons for going to the trouble of setting up a balance sheet for each job, no matter how obvious the solution may appear to be.

Without a balance sheet before you, a certain amount of mental confusion is bound to follow. This confusion of "trying to make up your mind" is so annoying and tiresome, that whatever point happens to be in your mind when you get tired thinking about the whole thing is likely to affect your judgment unduly and to dominate your decision.

Without a balance sheet, you are likely to take the "easiest way out," unduly emphasizing the immediate advantages and overlooking the long-range disadvantages. Any solution to your career problem which involves extended preparation is likely to be arbitrarily rejected if you permit yourself to think exclusively in terms of immediate difficulties involved, and to overlook long-time advantages.

If you set up a balance sheet, you at least have the assurance that all the evidence at hand is being considered. You have a long-range picture before you, not only of the advantages, but also the disadvantages. And such well-rounded consideration will give you confidence in the soundness of your decision.

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To illustrate, let's see how Thomas Arnold's case came out. Remember, he was the insurance salesman who was considering the jobs of detective, criminal lawyer, and judge.

Arnold found in his conversations with criminal court judges that he lacked the basic ability to be a judge. He simply was not up to the business of arriving at calm and impartial judgments on cases without popping off and taking sides. This was enough to eliminate the judgeship from any further consideration.

Here are his balance sheets on the remaining two solutions—detective and criminal lawyer.

DETECTIVE

Disadvantages

1. I would be assigned to all kinds of cases, many of them of no particular interest to me and some of them downright distasteful.
2. I don't like the general idea of spending the rest of my life "snooping."
3. In this role, I would not have the opportunity of using and developing my ability as a public speaker.
4. My wife doesn't want me to be a cop.

Advantages

1. I have the basic ability to be a detective.
2. The time and money involved in getting into detective service would be relatively small.
3. It *is* a fascinating job, one I've always thought would be interesting and exciting.

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CRIMINAL LAWYER

Disadvantages

1. Preparation would require about five years' further study.
2. I haven't the money.
3. At this late date, my wife thinks I'm crazy to even think of such a thing.

Advantages

1. It would permit me to make full use of my natural ability as a public speaker.
2. It would enable me to select my own cases—the ones involving young men which fascinate me most.
3. I would certainly be in my glory pleading a case in a court room.
4. I would be a professional man.

A careful study of these balance sheets persuaded Arnold in a big way that what he wanted to do more than anything else in the world was to be a criminal lawyer.

But there were three things that stood in his way: time, money, and folks.



CHAPTER III



WHY DON'T YOU DO IT?

EVEN IF YOU HAVE FOUND OUT HOW YOU *can* AVOID WORK, even if you do know what you really want to do, that doesn't mean that you'll go ahead and *do it*.

Why not?

Well, most of us live in a curious dream world. The young live in the promises of the future. The old live in the unembraced opportunities of the past. A young person says, "As soon as I get the time and get a few dollars ahead, I'm going to. . . ." The old person says, "If I were young again, I'd . . ."

I have had young people tell me in a loud voice what they definitely planned to do. I have had older people tell me in a whisper of what they always dreamed of doing—but never did.

A young advertising salesman told me that he had always had an ambition to write a little human interest column for his county's weekly newspaper, but that he didn't have the time. When we examined his schedule, we found that he had played bridge two evenings, gone to the movies two evenings, and attended a dance one evening of the previous week.

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A copywriter in a New York advertising agency told me that he had wanted to paint landscapes ever since he was in high school.

"May I see some of your work sometime?" I asked.

"Oh, I've never really finished anything," he half apologized. "I've always had to work for a living. But some day I hope to get enough money ahead to have some leisure time. Then I'm going to paint."

I know a young man who has been out of the Army for over a year now. He's been talking about taking some night-school courses, but he has consistently put off doing anything about it because "my wife likes to go out in the evening."

I know a young housewife who studied music before she was married and who wants to continue cultivating her voice. But her husband is against it. He fails to realize that his wife would be far happier and do a much better job of homemaking if he encouraged her to follow her hobby.

I know a recent graduate of medical school who is now making all kinds of unreasonable attempts to stick to medicine, even though he "hates the stuff," merely because his father, a physician, is so set on the idea that his son should be one, too.

I know another young man who makes a modest living as a printing salesman. But he detests it. He wants to get back into radio work. Last week, he had a chance

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to become program manager on a small station in the Midwest where he worked before he was married. But he turned down the offer because his wife doesn't want to move from New York.

A young man who had been a salesman in a department store, a clerk in an advertising agency, and a checker in a furniture factory, confided: "I don't know whether I ought to tell you this or not, but ever since I heard of the excavations in Egypt I've read everything I could get on the subject. If I only could, I'd like to go to Egypt and attempt to find out what we could learn from those past civilizations."

"And why don't you do it?" I asked him.

"Why? That's simple. I couldn't get a job with an expedition. I'd have to go back to college and study ancient history and hieroglyphics, and all that, and I haven't any money."

But curiously enough, I have talked with many young men and women in college whose families are wealthy, and many of them are not even studying the things they like.

A young lady would like to be a commercial artist, but is majoring in English because her mother doesn't like the commercial art field for a girl and thinks her daughter ought to be a teacher, as she was.

An engineering student in one of our leading universities wants to be an interior decorator, but because he has

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a "sure job" with his uncle's construction company when he gets out of school, he is trying (unsuccessfully, since he is not in the least interested in engineering) to "plow through the darned old courses."

A middle-aged clerk in a clothing store told me that some day he hoped to have enough money to open up a radio and electrical shop of his own. "Selling suits gets pretty dull, but it's a means to an end."

How often we hear men say that what they are doing is merely a means to an end! But the tragic part about it all is that they'll spend their time until they die working on the means and never reach the end at all.

In confidential sessions with men and women of all ages, I have listened to many such cases. I could recite hundreds of them to you. And I haven't heard a new excuse for years. Whenever a person is not doing what he says he wants to do, he always has what sounds like a good excuse. And it's always one or more of three:

1. "I haven't the time."
2. "I haven't the money."
3. "My folks don't want me to."

Let's examine these common excuses and see if they really hold water.

"I Haven't the Time."

Without Time nothing is possible. Everything requires Time. Time is the only permanent and absolute ruler in the

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universe. But she is a scrupulously fair ruler. She treats every living person exactly alike every day. No matter how much of the world's goods you have managed to accumulate, you cannot successfully plead for a single moment more than the pauper receives without ever asking for it. Time is the one great leveler. Everyone has the same amount to spend every day.

The next time you feel that you "haven't the time" to do what you really want to do, it may be worth-while for you to remember that you have as much time as anyone else—twenty-four hours a day. How you spend that twenty-four hours is really up to you.

Suppose you have a full-time job that keeps you occupied from nine to five, five days a week. All right, that time is sold. In return, you get enough to "live on," let us say. But what do you do with the other sixteen hours a day? Sleep eight. Yes, but that leaves eight. And what about week-ends?

If you will put down on paper how you have spent each hour of the day for the past seven days, I think you'll change your mind about not having the time. You may not have all the time you'd *like* for what you want to do, but you have time enough to get started. I've written ten books in the last twenty years by writing for just one hour a day.

I'm not suggesting for a moment that you give up your favorite diversions. But I think you will be surprised to

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learn, later in our discussion, the small part of this remaining eight hours which it is necessary to devote in the beginning to the thing you want to do, and the remarkable achievements possible for anyone who will consistently devote even as little as one hour a day to one single purpose. And the unvarnished truth is that every one of us who mouths the old excuse, "I haven't the time," wastes much more than an hour every day of his life.

It is generally recognized and accepted that only the busiest people ever have time for anything. An American tourist who had no duties whatsoever spent a year in France, yet "never had the time" to study French. An American secretary, with a ten weeks' job in France that kept her occupied fourteen hours a day, learned French in the remaining two hours a day that she had available.

You can tell me pretty accurately how you have spent your money during the past year. But can you give an accurate account of what has happened to your most valuable possession, Time? You may get more money, but that Time is spent. And whatever part of it you have wasted is lost forever.

A friend once said to Edison, "You lay down rather severe rules for one who wishes to succeed in life—putting in eighteen hours a day."

Edison answered, "Not at all. You do *something* all day long, don't you? Everyone does. If you get up at seven o'clock and go to bed at eleven, you have put in sixteen

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good hours, and it is certain that you have been doing something all that time. The only difference is that you do a great many things and I do one. If you took the time in question and applied it in one direction, you would succeed. Success is sure to follow such application. The trouble lies in the fact that people do not have one thing to stick to, letting all else go.”¹

But a person cannot apply himself to anything incessantly without growing weary unless he loves it—unless it's not work. And that's the real explanation of Edison's full use of his time.

If you were to spend an hour alone with the loud tick of a clock, or better yet, if you could spend an hour completely alone with an hour-glass, watching the sands of Time quickly slip through that vessel, and realize that 100 years from now you and I will both be gone, then you would begin to appreciate that TIME is the ONLY thing you really DO HAVE, and that you alone can do anything you wish with the Time that is yours.

If a personal case will be allowed, it may be interesting for you to know that this very sentence is being written at the railroad station out in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, while I wait for my train, an hour and thirty minutes late, and while others, waiting for the same train, walk around and sigh and make themselves miserable trying to kill time until the train gets in.

¹ O. S. Marsden, *How They Succeeded*, Lothrop, Lee, & Shepard Co., Boston, 1901, p. 237.

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"I Haven't the Money."

Ordinarily the older we get, the more emphasis we put upon money, the more we think money. And so it might be difficult for you to appreciate the fact that money is secondary. I didn't say money is of no importance. I said it is secondary.

Money never comes first in self-expression of any kind. Study the biographies of those who have built great fortunes, and you will learn that money came to them *after* they had produced or discovered something.

George Washington Carver was the son of a slave and a slave himself. He had no money. But he knew what he wanted to do. He wanted to study chemistry. So he did it. Starting with nothing, he collected old scraps from ash-heaps and rigged up a crude laboratory. He made insulating walls for houses from discarded peanut shells. Eventually, he made synthetic marble from wasted wood shavings, and hundreds of different useful products from so-called useless materials. Meanwhile, he studied, and became a Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, Honorary Doctor of Science, winner of the Spingarn Medal for Negro Achievement. From nothing, one might say, he created wealth.

Not long ago, a young man told me, "I'd like to go into the cattle business, but I haven't got the money."

"You ought to be glad you haven't got the money," I told him.

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"How do you mean?" he seemed surprised.

"Well, if you had enough money to go into the cattle business right now, you'd probably lose it. What do you know about the cattle business? If you want to go into the cattle business, the first thing to do is to go to work for somebody else and find out something about how the business is run. After you have acquired enough experience and accumulated a little money, then it's time for you to consider going into it on your own."

It's easy for a person with money to go into some favored business which he knows little about, and to lose his money fast. But when a fellow hasn't any money, he's *forced* to get a job with someone else until he learns enough about the business to be of real service, save some money, and finally go in for himself.

I've been career counseling men and women for a good many years now, and the people I have most trouble with are those who *have* money. For once they find out what they really want to do, they are not frightened enough, by economic necessity, to do anything about it.

Neither poverty nor riches has anything to do with the job of self-expression—doing what you want to do—except that the possession of money is likely to remove the pressure of necessity and lull us into a lazy coma. Financial security, soft living, plenty to eat, an easy chair, comfortable slippers, a warm fire—these are enough to ruin anyone.

In a world marked by constant change, where the rich

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of today are often the poor of tomorrow, due to circumstances beyond their control, the only security is your ability to produce something of value for your fellow man, and your only guarantee of happiness is your joy in producing it.

True happiness lies in the pursuit of your goal, achievement in your chosen field. This must always remain primary. Whenever money becomes primary, you are on treacherous ground.

"My Folks Don't Want Me To."

From the cradle to the grave, we are all in danger of being unduly influenced by what others want us to do.

We are all familiar with the fact that parents usually like to dominate the choice of their children in the selection of a vocation. A mother came to me not long ago saying that her boy had his heart set on being a musician.

"See if you can't get the notion out of his head," she said. "You know there's no future in music."

After I had spent an afternoon with this young man, listening to some of his own compositions, he and I organized a committee of two to "see if we couldn't get the notion out of *her* head."

As soon as we begin to get loose from our mother's apron strings, sweethearts sometimes interfere. One young man wanted to go to South America for an oil company,

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but his sweetheart wanted him to settle down and get a job in Pittsburgh.

"There's only one answer to that," I told him, "and you're the only one who can answer it. Of course you want to be married. It's not a question of whether you are going to do what you want to do *or* get married. You don't have to give up either one. If you feel you've got to get married, go ahead, and you and the *right* girl can work out your plans together. Plenty of others have done that. If you haven't the courage to do this thing now, while you are young and have your health and a minimum amount of responsibility, it is doubtful if you will ever amass the courage to do anything worth-while."

Men, too, can be stubborn about what their sweethearts or wives want to do. When one woman announced that she was planning to run for the local council, her husband strenuously opposed the whole idea. "You'll only make a fool out of yourself," he told her.

But when she went ahead and ran for office anyhow, he became one of her most ardent campaigners, and when she was finally elected to the city council, he was proud as punch.

Finally, "what our friends and associates think" influences us more than we realize. We like to live the life and stay in the role which others expect of us. A recent graduate of a divinity school would really like to teach English and write short stories, but he's "going through

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the motions" of becoming a preacher merely because he insists on playing the part which is expected of him by relatives and friends.

Each of us is somewhat like an electric light bulb, deriving its power from some central force. Just as the bulb accumulates dust and soot from the air around it until it is darkened, then blackened, so our individuality becomes dulled at first and then entirely blotted out from the accumulation of advice and interference which is superimposed upon us by family and friends. If you examine their advice, you will find that they are continually offering counsel based on their own experience in connection with a situation that is quite different from the one you are facing.

This does not mean that it is impossible to get constructive suggestions from some one else. The most important thing to remember is that you are to use only those suggestions that facilitate a fuller and more accurate expression of the individual objectives which you yourself believe to be worth-while.

One thing is certain. You will neither venture anything nor achieve anything if you permit yourself to be unduly influenced by others. It isn't a very pleasant thought, but it is none the less true that some of the worst advice often springs from the shortsighted and selfish interests of those whom we love most.

Remember this. Only one sound mind is needed to

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create a sound idea. "Two heads are better than one" is a popular fallacy that is enthusiastically embraced by those who are too lazy to think alone. When two people lean on each other, how can either possibly become strong enough for independent thought?

There is no one more colorless than the self-conscious, vacillating person who is neither hot nor cold, wet nor dry, because he is always wondering what others will think of him and is always trying to please everybody.

Of all the half-baked ideas that pop into our minds and flow out of our mouths, one of the worst is that we must get the approval of someone else before we can go ahead with anything.

Man as a group is chaotic. If you follow the changing whims and wishes of others, you too will be chaotic. If, on the other hand, you hold to the thoughts that you yourself know to be sound, you will become placid, strong, independent, sure.

You can never be really YOU until you achieve mental freedom from the fears, hates, superstitions, prejudices, and opinions of those on the outside.

Lose that mental freedom and you lose everything.

The attitude of your folks and your friends, like public opinion in the mass, is fickle and contrary. The more you pursue its favor the less you gain it; the less you yield to it the more it turns toward you. The world intuitively worships a man who has the courage to be himself.

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The moment you permit your happiness to depend upon the opinions or performance of someone else, guess what happens.

Now that we have calmly and sensibly examined these three excuses—"I haven't the time," "I haven't the money," "My folks don't want me to"—we see that each of them melts away as an imaginary obstacle when we shine the light of intelligence upon it. We see that they are not real reasons at all, but merely excuses.

When Thomas Arnold decided that he really wanted to be a criminal lawyer more than anything else in the world, that earnest decision alone gave him the courage to hurdle the common excuses—time, money, and folks. His wife began to realize how much he really wanted to do this thing. She saw that he was actually beginning to hate insurance. If he kept on, it looked as though he might become a miserable failure and she would feel partly to blame. So one morning she told him that she was sold on his going into criminal law. Together, they determined that they would somehow solve the financial problem.

If you read the story of any person who has ever achieved his goal, you will despise yourself for ever yielding to any of these imaginary "time, money, and folks" excuses that may be running through your mind and keeping you from becoming the person you can be.

If you surrender to any of these three excuses, you are destined to mental coma. Failure is certain. The lazy and

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inefficient use of time, the worship of money, and the futile pursuit of the approval of others will distort every worth-while desire in your heart and rob your life of any personal meaning.

If, on the other hand, you will entirely free your mind from these negative and destructive mental attitudes, you will become completely YOU, and nothing can stop you from doing what you *really* want to do.



CHAPTER IV



DECIDE ON YOUR FIRST STEP

ONCE YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO DO AND ARE ABLE TO smile off the common excuses—time, money, and folks—you are ready to decide on your first step toward your chosen field.

It may sound rather obvious, but I emphasize the importance of thinking about your *first* step, simply because most of us, contemplating our ultimate goal, are likely to be overwhelmed with the magnitude of the task before us.

Most of us like to eat, but suppose I asked you to eat 2,000 pounds of food. No matter how hungry you were, you would balk. Yet that's what you do every year of your life. You can do it because you "nibble at it" every day.

And so by "nibbling at your ultimate objective"—one step at a time—you can, little by little, achieve it, just as others have.

Another important point is this: don't put off the consideration of what your first step should be.

I say begin NOW to study your first step because procrastination has strangled more hopes than any other human deficiency I can think of. To put things off is so easy, especially if you drug and stupefy your mind with

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the fallacy that you will be better able to go ahead some time in the future than you are right now. As a matter of fact, there is nothing magical about the future. The future when it comes, is just like the present. The present is all you have and the opportunity of the present is worth more than the success of the past or the promise of the future.

Here's how Thomas Arnold decided on his first step toward becoming a criminal lawyer.

First of all, he listed the various possible solutions that occurred to him, as follows:

1. Possibly I could borrow some money and study law full-time.
2. I could continue to sell insurance while I study law part-time.
3. I could put in my application for a job on the police force, then graduate to the detective force in two or three years, and thereby get some practical experience in the field of crime while I study criminal law part-time.

After discussing the possibility of a loan with three of his "best friends," who he thought might be able to accommodate him, Arnold no longer looked upon this possible solution as promising, so he rejected Solution #1.

The second possible solution would permit Arnold to finish his preparations for the bar examination in about five years, studying part-time while he continued to sell insurance.

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Getting evidence on the third possible solution, Arnold made inquiries at local police headquarters and learned that he could probably pass the physical examination, become a policeman in due time after his application was put on file, and probably get a job on the detective force in a few years, thereby getting some valuable experience while he studied law part-time.

After studying the advantages and the disadvantages of these last two possible solutions, Arnold finally arrived at the balance sheets shown on the opposite page.

After studying these two balance sheets, Arnold arrived at a conclusion which combined the advantages of both of the above possible solutions. He decided to put in his application for a policeman's job, to begin his law studies at night school, and meanwhile to continue to sell insurance for a time until his appointment as a policeman came through. And that was Arnold's first step.

Another man, 38, bored with his work as a factory foreman, decided he wanted to be a country doctor back in the Kansas village where he had spent his youth. His first step was to switch from the day shift to the night shift and study medicine by day. His wife took a job in a hat shop to add to the family income.

A secretary wanted to get into personnel work. Her first step was to enroll in two personnel courses given at a local college at night, and to apply for a job as personnel assistant with her present company.

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SELLING INSURANCE WHILE I STUDY LAW

Disadvantages

1. I would be getting no practical experience in my chosen field during the period of my scholastic preparation.
2. The income from selling insurance is somewhat precarious, and I would have this problem on my mind during my entire period of study.

Advantages

1. After all, selling insurance is the only source of income that I have right now, and it is wise to continue this until I am able to make a living in my chosen field.

GETTING A JOB ON THE POLICE FORCE AND THEN ON DETECTIVE FORCE WHILE I STUDY LAW

Disadvantages

1. My wife doesn't like the idea of my being a cop—even to start with. I personally don't relish the idea of being a uniformed policeman, or even a plain-clothes "snooper."
2. The income would be a little less than what I have averaged as an insurance salesman.

Advantages

1. It certainly would give me a valuable, practical experience that would strengthen my grasp of law as I study it. And this experience would give me more confidence and a more authoritative background which I could use to advantage when I actually get into the practice of law.
2. My income, though a little less, would be regular and one I could count on from month to month.

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A saxophone player with a dance band wanted to get into accounting work. His first step was to get a job as a cost clerk, begin his studies toward the C.P.A. three nights a week, and give music lessons on Saturday to add to his income as a cost clerk.

A clerk in a florist shop wanted to write magazine stories. Her first step was to take a course of study on magazine writing while she continued to hold down her present job, and more important, to put herself on a schedule and actually write one hour a day. Incidentally, the first piece she had accepted by one of the smaller publications in the florist field was called "A Day in a Flower Shop."

A young man who worked on a toothpaste assembly line and who had a woodworking shop in his basement, wanted to be a carpenter and builder. His first step was to get a job as a carpenter's helper in the plant shop.

A man who now specializes in designing surface instruments for the detection of oil deposits, continued to work in the drafting room while he took his first step in his chosen field. He pursued engineering studies by correspondence, and on completion of his studies toward the bachelor's degree, was awarded a research assistantship at one of our leading universities.

A gas station attendant who wanted to get into sales promotion work began by sending ideas into the sales promotion department. He just kept sending them in. One

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or two of them clicked and today he is one of the most successful sales promotion men in the business.

The simplest way in the world for you to decide on *your* first step, is to ask yourself three simple questions:

1. What experience have I in my chosen field?
2. What formal educational training have I had along these lines?
3. In light of whatever experience or training I have had, what kind of job do I have the ability to fill *right now*, and what kind of a study program should I undertake to further improve myself?

Obviously, your first step is to land that job or to begin that course of study. Sometimes you can do both at the very outset.

No matter how high your aim is, you can always start with whatever level of job fits your present education and experience, and then, through study and application, keep qualifying yourself for the next job ahead, until you finally reach your ultimate goal.

Keep Your Plans to Yourself until They Are Fully Developed

When you begin to figure out what your first step should be, you'll find yourself stimulated with a number of entirely new ideas.

At this stage, don't make the mistake of talking over your ideas prematurely with others.

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There's an important psychological reason for keeping ideas to yourself until they are fully developed. But relatively few people ever grasp the significance of it. If you gain no other lesson from this book than the one which is to follow, your reading will be worth-while, for it is doubtful if anyone ever achieved any goal without practicing, either deliberately or unconsciously, the vital principle involved.

Nearly everyone has ideas concerning what he would like to do. Many people make plans. But with most of us, our ideas, no matter how good, are soon forgotten and our plans somehow never seem to materialize. Why?

Well, let's see what happens when we get an idea. Several years ago, I got an idea that was new to me. I thought of a plan whereby manufacturers of food products could advertise and get the active co-operation of retail stores handling their product. But somehow I never did anything with the idea. Evidently someone else got a similar idea, for about two years later I received a great shock when I discovered that a company had been organized to provide the same service I had thought of. The company was operating at a nice profit. Of course, as you know, perhaps no man ever made known an invention or a plan that someone else hadn't "thought of it before." But I asked myself one question, "Why didn't I develop that idea?"

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I took a walk and recalled that, after I got the idea, I became so enthusiastic that *right away* I told a few friends about it. There were a lot of questions raised that I couldn't answer because I hadn't thought the thing through. My friends didn't seem to be so enthusiastic and before long I forgot all about it.

I was so interested in knowing why I had not put the idea across and why another man *had*, that I went to see the head of this organization to find out how he did it. In our talk he told me: "When I got this idea, I kept it to myself. I always keep new ideas to myself. The more I thought about it the more difficult it became for me to keep it to myself. But I did. Because I told no one about it I was *forced* to think it through. Before long I had a complete plan thought out. Then I brought some picked friends into the picture and we put it over together."

After this interview, I went back to the hotel and wrote the following note to myself on a little card which I have always kept:

"Remember that a burst of enthusiasm usually accompanies a new idea and that the tendency is for you to hurry and tell someone. The mental energy generated by your idea is thereby dissipated in talk rather than in thought. After you talk about it a while, you grow tired. Your idea flows out through the mouth like a weak, shallow creek. The energy that would have developed the idea is released and the idea dies. *Don't you talk to anybody about any idea until you have fully developed it!* That man held his idea to himself—dammed it

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up with control—until it gained the power of a deep reservoir. No wonder he had the power to put his idea over!”

Bear in mind, then, that when you get a new idea your initial impulse will be to tell your friends and associates all about your plans—what you are going to do—what you are ultimately going to be.

If you are wise you will not yield to this impulse. If you are so weak that you need the encouragement and applause of others, or if you are so unintelligent that you believe the perfunctory approval or disapproval of family or friends makes one iota of difference, you will never reach any goal.

When you babble your plans here and there, you expose yourself on the one hand to those who kid you along with meaningless and uninformed approval, and on the other hand to those who can think up a dozen reasons why you are an imbecile for considering such a goal.

Your kind friends will offer criticisms and objections to your program that, in the beginning, you are too inexperienced to answer. They will paint pictures of hardship that will make you afraid.

No matter what a man attempts that is new, there is always a crop of gapers ready to laugh. And those nearest and dearest to him are likely to laugh the loudest.

So instead of squandering your early enthusiasm in a futile attempt to excite the world about you and your plans, preserve that enthusiasm within yourself. Instead

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of letting your enthusiasm flow out through your mouth like a shallow creek, dam it up. Let it accumulate and gradually gain the power of a deep reservoir. That power will give you the necessary confidence to get started on your first step.

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CHAPTER V

MOVE INTO YOUR CHOSEN FIELD

ONCE YOU HAVE DECIDED—IN LIGHT OF YOUR EXPERIENCE and education—what kind of job you should go after as a starting point in your chosen field, your next question is: “How can I land that job?”

Well, here's how!

First of all, make a list of the organizations you would like to be associated with. Pick out at least a dozen companies—companies with a good reputation, companies you'd be proud to be connected with, companies whose names are well and favorably known. Any experience you get with such a company will be *salable*.

Don't start your favorite career with a company that few people have ever heard of. Such experience is not salable. And, after all, your main purpose, to begin with, is to build a *salable background*.

Next, sit down and make a list of your friends who may know someone who works in one of these companies. Don't forget former teachers who think well of you. Go to see these friends or write them a letter and tell them about your plans. See if they can arrange an introduction to someone in authority in one or more of your selected

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organizations. This is what I call the *sponsored approach*.

Next, plan your interview in advance. Prepare a brief written statement of your educational background, including your extracurricular activities and any practical experience you might have had. State exactly what kind of job you're after and why. In addition to having this written statement as a basis for your interview, it's a good idea to find out as much as you can, *in advance*, about the person who is going to interview you. Find out if he has ever written anything. If so, read it beforehand and tell him it's good if you think so. If it is possible for you to learn something about the company's problems and to go into an interview with a constructive idea, so much the better.

This is the kind of preparatory work that is well worth the time and the effort required, for it pays off in results in a big way.

One young bank teller in his thirties decided he wanted to get into the tobacco business. For a year he talked tobacco to every friend he met. He asked them whether they smoked or not. He found out what they smoked—pipe, cigarette, or cigar. He asked them if they chewed tobacco. He asked them what they liked or disliked about the brands of tobacco they used, how long they had been using them, what brands they used to use, why they quit. He took notes. He read books on the subject. He followed articles in sales and advertising journals by leaders in the

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tobacco business. He watched their advertising. He listed six companies that he might like to work for as a research assistant.

Finally, he got an idea that he thought one of these companies might be interested in. He secured a sponsored introduction to the general sales manager. He told the sales manager about his interviews with men who had discontinued one of the company's leading brands of cigars. "I was wondering if you people have changed that cigar in any way recently. How are sales on that brand in different parts of the country?"

This conversation revealed that the factory *had* made a very slight change in the filler of the cigar, believing that they were improving it by giving it "more character." Further interviews with consumers proved that they did not look upon this change as an improvement. The company went back to the same old filler and the young bank teller was offered a regular job in the sales research department. Then he resigned at the bank.

A young woman, fresh from college, interested in the field of journalism, made a list of the midwestern newspapers she might like to work for, and secured sponsored introductions to three editors, all of whom told her in the first interview "No opening right now for a cub reporter." So she proceeded to furnish the three editors with "proof material." Every day she sent each of the editors a brief "piece," covering various kinds of subjects all the way

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from a train wreck to a lost cat. After about six weeks, one of the editors took her on.

Our files are bulging with cases which show how strong sponsorship helps anyone to get the job he wants, and while it's always worth-while to try to get a sponsored approach to a prospective employer, sometimes you can't think of anyone who could recommend you to a man in authority where you'd like to work. But don't let this bother you. There are other ways of going about landing the job you want.

A young man from Omaha, interested in the hotel business, made a list of twelve leading hotels in New York City. Then he proceeded to call on the trade publications in this field in order to find out as much as he could about the men who operated these hotels. He learned that the president of one of the leading hotels in town had done considerable writing on hotel management. After digesting this man's books on the subject, he called to see him, complimented him on his writings, and they wound up discussing various points in the books. Then the young man explained his interest in the hotel business, asked if he could go to work as a dishwasher, janitor, clerk, mail boy, or at any other job which would permit him to get into the hotel business and learn something about it. The president introduced this young applicant to the head of the mail service who gave him a job right there on the spot in the mail room of this leading hotel from 11 P.M. to 7 A.M.

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A young man from Pittsburgh, interested in the sale of newspaper advertising, selected a city daily he wanted to work for. Then he made calls on about fifty merchants in the community, asked them for their opinions of the local newspapers, made a list of the merchants who used little or no space in the newspaper he had selected as a prospective employer. Then he called on the advertising manager of this newspaper and asked, "Why isn't your newspaper carrying this business?" When the advertising manager quickly admitted, "It must be because we haven't got anybody around here who knows how to get that business," the young applicant offered his services to work on these "problem accounts," and was hired.

I could go on with other cases, but I know it is abundantly clear that when a person knows exactly what he wants to do and is willing to interest himself in an employer's problem, that employer is likely to be impressed. He's impressed for the simple reason that most people who come to him for a job don't know specifically what they want and they are mostly interested in their own problems and how much money they are going to make. They are more interested in what they are going to get than what they are going to give. We might as well be frank with ourselves. No matter what kind of job we're after, all we have to offer to any employer is some aid and assistance in solving *his* problems. Whenever an employer is satisfied that you can do this, you don't have to ask him for a job. He'll offer you one.

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If you are already employed, there are a few simple rules to be followed in shifting from your present job to your selected field:

1. Whenever possible, do not leave your old position until you have definitely secured a new one. An employed man is in a stronger trading position than a man who is out of work.
2. Tell your superior that you are contemplating a change. He will appreciate your asking him for advice and taking him into your confidence.
3. Give him the real reasons for your desire to change, so that he will clearly understand that your leaving is no reflection on him or your present position, that the change is being made merely because you seek an opportunity to get into your chosen field.
4. Ask his advice about approaching the organization which you are interested in negotiating with. He may have some personal contacts that will help you. Even if he hasn't, his suggestions and personal endorsement will mean a great deal.

Now that you know how to move into your chosen field, don't put it off. Human inertia is a powerful retarding force, and ordinarily we have to get on a pretty hot spot before we will actually make a major move of any kind.

When I drove this point home to a young man, he came back with a story which illustrates it far better than I could.

"When I was a kid back on the farm," he told me, "we had a dog, and, like most dogs, he liked to lie in front of the fire. It was one of my chores to get up in the morning

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and start the fires in the kitchen stove and in the fireplace in the dining-room. Every morning, our mutt would follow me into the dining-room and plant himself about three feet in front of the fireplace. As soon as the fire got started and warmed him up a little, he would fall into a doze. I used to sit there in a chair and watch him. After a while the logs would begin to throw out some real heat. But that mutt wouldn't move. Every now and then he would rouse himself enough to growl at the fire. Then he'd doze off again. Then he'd growl, and doze, and growl, and doze. As the fire got hotter, he'd growl and *snap* and doze. But not until the fire got so hot that it almost singed the hair on his starboard side, would he move back to improve his position."

It is unfortunate that most people in the wrong job continue to doze and growl and snap, but conditions never get quite hot enough to force them to do anything about it.

Admittedly, it takes a certain amount of courage for anyone to move from one field, even though he doesn't like it, into another one that he prefers. But you've got to muster up enough confidence to take the plunge.

Confidence is difficult to define. But I can give you an excellent example of it. When I was at the University of Chicago, my days were full. But I spent half an hour every evening from 5:30 to 6 in the university swimming-pool. One afternoon I was in the locker-room, getting un-

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dressed, and I noticed that my neighbor was a blind man who was also preparing for a swim.

"Will you take me in to the swimming-pool?" he asked. "This is my first visit to your Chicago pool."

"Be glad to," I answered.

"Now you are at the side of the pool," I told him, "and this is the shallow end. Shall I help you in?"

"Oh no! Take me to the deep end," he laughed. "I like to dive."

This confidence startled me, but I took him to the edge of the pool at the deep end, and he asked, "How far is the water level below us?"

My hair raised just a little. "About two feet below where we are standing."

"Is there anybody in the way?"

"No, it's all right to dive now." And before I had finished speaking he had made one of the prettiest dives I have ever seen.

When the time comes for you to dive into the pool of your new interests, you must have that kind of confidence. And don't be disappointed if your first dive results in a belly-flopper. No matter how many times you fall flat, you must have the intelligence to study and to correct your mistakes, and you must have the determination to get up on the board and try it again.

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IF THERE'S ANYTHING THAT BURNS ME UP, IT'S TO SEE A person get nicely started in the right job and then get thrown out on his ear because of some common mistake in human relations.

Yet that's what happens to far too many able people.

We have found that the more ability a person acquires, the weaker he's likely to become in his human relations—unless he makes a *conscious* effort to strengthen himself.

In fact, "mistakes in human relations" are the most important reasons why many competent people get fired, eased out, or passed up when promotion time comes round.

Let's see how we can avoid the more common mistakes in human relations and win the confidence of others.

Don't Go Over the Boss's Head

I've seen so many cases in which people have tried to leap over the boss's head and have suffered disastrous results, that I have come to believe that this is one of the most damaging mistakes that anyone can make.

Ben Irwin graduated from one of our leading colleges

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of engineering. He was interested in the design of automatic machinery. I helped him to land a job with one of the leading companies in this field. About a year later, he was back on my doorstep, saying he was "due for the skids."

I immediately contacted Ben's boss who gave me the complete story.

"I like men with initiative," he told me, "but Ben is entirely too impatient and aggressive. He's gone over my head to the production director three or four times with ideas that he's never even discussed with me. This makes it look as though I don't even know what's going on in my own department. Ben seems to be awfully afraid that he's not going to get the credit for every little thing he thinks up. I don't care how good an engineer he is, if he keeps this up I'm going to have to let him go, and I told him so yesterday."

After I had secured this report, I had a long talk with Ben.

"You see, Ben," I told him, "there are three requirements for success in any job: first, your desire to work at the job; second, your ability to do the job; and third, your capacity for getting along with other people on the job.

"You're a great engineer, Ben. You have creative ability. You already know a lot about automatic machinery. You're ingenious in solving problems in design. And

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you're doing what you want to do. But your boss doesn't like the idea of you going over his head to the production director.

"Just put yourself in your boss's place. Wouldn't it make you pretty sore if a young engineer did that to you? You have a great future with this company, Ben, if you can learn to co-operate with your boss. If you don't, you'll find it tough going and slow going no matter where you go."

Up to this time, it had apparently never dawned on Ben that he was making such a grave error. But the next day he went to his boss and apologized. Since that time, he has been doing very well, and today Ben has a good chance of becoming the next chief engineer.

However, in most instances, things don't turn out so well.

The assistant advertising manager for a large department store became impatient because her boss would not approve a suggested program. One morning she carried her fight over the boss's head to one of the head buyers and that afternoon she was looking for a new job—without the support or sponsorship of her former boss, needless to say.

The controller of a good-sized organization decided that the general manager was not astute enough to effect a lot of improvements he had in mind. So he went over the general manager's head to the president. While he con-

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tinued with the same company for about a year, things were never quite the same. He was gradually eased out. And he's never had a first-rate job since.

So any time you get to feel that your boss doesn't know what it's all about, that you could run things a lot better than he can, and that you've got to go over his head to get results, just be patient until the leaders of your organization find all this out and take the proper action. Meanwhile, don't try to undermine your boss and don't try to go over his head. It's dangerous business.

Don't Step on Other People's Ideas

One of the easiest ways to get people to hate you in any organization is to step all over their ideas. Not long ago, a factory production manager called a meeting of all foremen to explain an improved plan for handling paper work on the factory floor which he wished to have adopted. When he asked the foremen what they thought of it, Eddie said, "I don't think it will work,"—all of which didn't improve the production manager's opinion of Eddie.

When one of the other foremen made a constructive suggestion for further improving the operation of the plan, Eddie didn't think that would apply to his production line.

After the meeting, one of the foremen said to me, "Eddie doesn't like any idea unless he thought of it first."

No matter what you're asked to do on the job, it's a

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pretty good policy to try out an idea before you step on it. There's more than one way to kill a cat and there's more than one way to do a job. Whether you think you're 100 per cent right or not, give the other fellow the benefit of the doubt. Hear him out. Give his idea a break. Chances are he's not entirely wrong.

"Five minutes after I left the board room," explained the advertising manager of a large organization, "I thought of what I *should* have said. You see, I had carefully prepared my whole plan, and I knew it was right. But I was so eager to get my program approved, that I immediately opposed the sales manager who suggested a change. *Now* I can see that he was right, too. And what's more, I could have accepted his suggested change without damaging my program one bit. In fact, the suggested change would have helped it.

"If I had only told him that in the meeting, he would have gone along with me on the rest of the program.

"I just need more practice in going along with the other fellow in tough situations."

Admit, Don't Defend, Your Mistakes

When I was nineteen years old, I had a job in a Youngstown steel mill—assistant timekeeper. My job was to go around the mill every morning and every afternoon and check off every employee. But I had to *see* a workman before I checked his name. For the first few weeks I had

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lots of fun climbing around furnaces, looking through tunnels, and searching the far corners of the mill until I had *actually seen* every last man. But after a while I began to get a little careless. Sometimes men were working up behind a huge furnace and I couldn't see them all. Instead of going up, I developed the habit of calling to some workman I could see and asking him who else was up there. Late one afternoon the boss called me in.

"I see you have Martin checked in for today," he said, holding up a copy of my morning report.

"Yes, sir. He was here this morning," was my quick comeback.

"He was like hell. You took another man's word for it. You didn't *see* him. He wasn't here."

"What do you expect me to do," I countered, "risk my life climbing around a furnace to see a man?"

"Oh, so that's the way you look at it, huh? You're going to stand there and defend yourself when you made a mistake. You're going to tell me that it's all right to check a man present when he's absent. You don't know the first principles about your job. If you're afraid to climb around furnaces, we can get a man who will. You're fired."

That evening I didn't feel like eating much supper. That night I did a lot of thinking. Was I sore? For the first few hours I couldn't think of an appropriate name to fit that big gorilla of a boss. How would *he* like to climb around furnaces and crawl through stinking tunnels—why, the

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big ham! Who wants to work for a bully like him anyhow?

But there were two things he said to me that I couldn't get out of my mind: "You're going to stand there and defend yourself when you make a mistake" and "You don't know the first principles about your job." These two sentences kept banging away at me until I finally had to admit to myself that I was wrong about the whole thing. I got to sleep about 3 A.M.

The next morning I went to see the boss. "You certainly did the right thing when you fired me," I began. "I was dead wrong. But what's worse—I was too pig-headed to see it and admit it. I learned more about my job last night in two hours than I learned working on the job for two months. Last night for the first time, I realized what a timekeeper is supposed to do. I want to thank you for waking me up. I'm going to look for a new job today, and thanks to you, I'll never make the mistake again of defending myself when I'm wrong. If I'm ever fired again—that won't be the reason."

And to my surprise, the boss said, "If you mean that, take off your coat and go to work."

I know the manager of a well-known orchestra who was "called on the carpet" before a labor leader.

He ironed out the whole difficulty in a one-hour meeting with the union chief, largely because he started the interview by saying, "I want to explain certain mistakes we've been making in our dealings with the union, and how we came to make them."

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"I was wrong."

"I made a mistake."

Tough words to say. But you will find that it is possible for you actually to build character for yourself and to enjoy the co-operation of others in a measure you've never before realized, merely by admitting, not defending, your mistakes.

Watch Your Promises

When I was in the Navy during World War I, our Chief Petty Officer approached me one afternoon. He asked me to go out on a date with him that night, and he built a glowing picture of the "lovely sister" his date would bring along.

That night this "lovely" sister turned out to be "anything but lovely." My confidence in the chief was shattered.

A foreman promised his superintendent that a certain production run would be finished by Tuesday—sure. But when Tuesday came, it wasn't.

A salesman promised his boss that he would land a big order by the first of the year. But when January rolled around, he didn't have the order.

All of us make careless promises that we don't have to make at all. We don't have to "promise the moon" in order to get a person's confidence. In fact, we ultimately lose the confidence we are trying to build up with these very promises with which we hope to gain it.

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It's so easy to let your enthusiasm run away with you and to make promises that are not easy to fulfill. But the master salesman, and the master in human relations, know that conservative promises—and often no promises at all—inspire more confidence than a lot of overstatements.

One of the wisest teachers I ever had told me, "Never make an unqualified promise about the future."

Certainly it is vital in all our human relations to see to it that any promise we do make really comes true!

How to Pry Open Closed Minds

No matter what you want to do, it's important to recognize that you're bound to encounter, from time to time, people whose minds are absolutely *closed* to your suggestions. And unless you know how to open a person's mind, you're licked before you start.

Most people feel that they are misunderstood. And they are. They are for the simple reason that rarely does anyone take the time to try to understand them.

I don't care who he is or how stubborn he is, any person ultimately will open his mind to you if you can only sell yourself on the proposition of taking the time to understand his point of view and help him to be right.

That's the one sure way to open anyone's mind. And opening his mind is your first step toward getting him to believe what you say and do what you want.

Any time you open your mind and make an active effort

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really to understand the other person's side of any question, you automatically inspire him to listen to and hear *your* side of the question.

Grown-ups think much the same as children. The main difference is that grown-ups are likely to cover up their thoughts more. So let's lead off with a child's case that clearly reveals what to do and what not to do when you're opposed.

Some time ago, at our house, we had vegetable soup for dinner—homemade vegetable soup.

My wife made it and every member of the family had something nice to say about it . . . "Delicious!" . . . "Best I've ever tasted!" . . . "What flavor!" . . . everyone, that is, but our seven-year-old boy.

He just sat there—wouldn't touch it.

"What's the matter with you?" I inquired.

"I don't like vegetable soup," he replied, without even looking up.

Now I believed that I was absolutely right in feeling that this boy, like the rest of our children, should learn to eat what's put in front of him—especially healthful foods such as vegetable soup. So I proceeded to tell him so, using cold logic—which is always a mistake in dealing with human beings.

"How can you say you don't like *this* vegetable soup when you haven't even tasted it?" I argued.

"I don't like *any* vegetable soup," was his pat reply.

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"Why . . . everybody likes vegetable soup," I countered excitedly. "It's one of the most healthful and delicious dishes you can eat. It has everything in it. It's full of vitamins. Makes you grow. Makes you strong."

"Well, *I* don't like vegetable soup," was his firm position.

"Well, you're going to eat it," I commanded. "If you don't understand how to eat with the rest of the family, take that dish of vegetable soup into the playroom and don't come back till it's finished."

So the boy marched off to the playroom with his vegetable soup.

Soon we had all finished our soup and the main course was served. But there was no report from the boy in the playroom. I got up from the table, walked down the hall into the playroom and there he sat.

The soup hadn't been touched.

His mind (and his mouth) were closed to vegetable soup.

Before I had a chance to open my mouth, he said, "You know, Dad, you can't *force* someone to like vegetable soup."

That was enough for me.

Even though I still felt that I was right and he was wrong, it was perfectly apparent that up to this point I was getting nowhere at all for the simple reason that I was helping him to be wrong. That merely closed his mind. When this suddenly dawned on me, I immediately decided to reopen his mind by helping him to be right.

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"You're right, boy," I admitted. "I just made a mistake. Pass it up this time. Come on and eat the rest of your dinner. We'll talk about vegetable soup some other time. Okay?"

"Okay, Dad."

Later, when I took him up to bed, *he* reopened the subject.

When I kissed him good night, he put his little hand over on my arm, and said, reassuringly, "Dad . . . you don't have to worry about making that mistake at dinner."

"Mistake? Who—ME? Oh . . . yeah . . ."

That opened up quite a man-to-man talk, and he seemed fairly receptive to my reasonably complete review of all the healthful advantages of eating vegetable soup.

"I just went about it in the wrong way," I concluded. "But there must be some answer. There must be *some* way to get you to like vegetable soup. And I want you to help me to find that way."

Suddenly the boy offered a solution. "Do you know how to get me to like it?" he said eagerly.

"How?" said I, with bated breath.

"Just don't have it for a long, long time," he counseled. "Then I'll get to like it. That's how I got to like spinach."

Then I remembered that I had felt the same way at one time about tapioca pudding.

"Another thing, Dad," he continued, "you see, you're lucky! You're married!"

"And what's that got to do with it?" I inquired.

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"Why—you *never* have to eat what *you* don't like! All you have to do is to tell Mommy what you want for dinner, and you get it. What do I have to do—wait till I get married before I can get what I like?"

"No, boy. You don't have to wait till you get married," I told him. "What do you want for dinner tomorrow night?"

Now he *was* interested. Now his mind *was* open—wide open.

Cube steak (that's the inexpensive Irish cut) and string beans and mashed potatoes and ice cream with chocolate sauce and nuts, was his selection.

"Okay . . . that's what we'll have. Come to think of it, each one in the family can have a turn saying what he wants, and that will solve one of the greatest problems that Mommy has, because she's always wondering what she'll have for dinner. But if we eat what you like tomorrow night, will you eat what Mommy likes on Tuesday night, and what Ann likes on Wednesday night and what Myrtle likes on Thursday night and what I like on Friday night?"

The boy agreed wholeheartedly.

So it's apparent to me, and I know by this time it must be to you, that it takes plenty of practice before we develop the necessary patience to help the other fellow to be right—especially when we're convinced at the outset that we are right and he's wrong.

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But by helping this child to be right (even though I felt he was wrong) I opened his mind.

And not only that.

Once his mind was opened, he willingly helped me to be right and offered a solution that cleared up the whole problem.

Today he eats vegetable soup when it's served—and likes it.

True, I could have used force to *make* him eat it. But he wouldn't have *liked* it. And more important, he wouldn't have liked *me*.

In most of our everyday relations with grownups, we can't *force* them to do what we want them to do—even if we're right and they're wrong.

We must *persuade* them.

I know an able young sales promotion manager who battled his boss for a raise and got nowhere for the simple reason that he felt that he was getting a raw deal and was always trying to prove that his boss was a tightwad.

He was right in *desiring* a raise, but his boss was also right in feeling that he was getting paid all he was worth.

I saw this same young man secure a substantial raise after he had reversed his mental attitude toward the boss.

The moment he began "helping the boss to be right," he found himself actively trying to figure out why the boss thought that way. In effect, he told his employer, "When you say I don't deserve a raise, that is of vital interest to

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me, for I know you must have some sound reasons for what you say. So I'd appreciate your letting me know from time to time how I can go about making myself more valuable to you so that in your judgment I'll really deserve a raise."

By this simple reversal of his mental attitude, the young promotion manager not only enlisted his boss's support and help in making himself more valuable, but he opened his employer's mind to all the evidence he had to present indicating why his pay should be increased.

Think of the people you know. Isn't it true that you do most for the people who open their minds to you and help you to be right? And isn't it equally true that you do the least for those who argue with you and try to prove you're wrong?

Sure it takes time! Sure it requires patience! But any person who helps the other fellow to be right—yes, anyone who even hopes sincerely that others will be right—is welcome anywhere. He finds open minds and open hearts wherever he goes.

Prove You're WORTHY of Confidence

There's nothing mysterious about winning a person's confidence. It depends on our everyday thoughts and actions in little things as well as in big things.

Day in and day out, in casual relations and vital relations with others, we are continually in the process of either gaining or losing their confidence.

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Their estimate of us either rises or falls depending on what we think, what we say, what we do. And if we can possibly develop the habit of *thinking* of the other fellow's interests, as well as our own, we automatically begin to say and to do the things which build sound confidence.

In one company I know a lot about, the controller resigned and the chief accountant came to me and asked me how he could prove to the boss that *he* was the man for the job. "I want this job and I want it bad," he told me.

"Well, just forget about what *you* want for a moment," I told him, "and begin thinking about what the boss wants. Go to the general manager and ask him to tell you exactly what kind of man he's looking for to fill that vacancy.

"Then you'll have to be perfectly honest with yourself in trying to determine whether or not your qualifications fit in with what he wants. Don't present yourself as 'the perfect answer.' There are no perfect answers. Tell him what your strengths are and what your weaknesses are in terms of what he's looking for. Then ask him whether any other applicant is better qualified for the job than you are. If there is someone better qualified, tell the boss to hire that man—not you—because that's what you would do if you were in his shoes. But if no other applicant is better fitted for the job than you are, tell him that you feel it would be in the best interests of the company to promote you. Tell him that you have complete confidence in his decision, no matter what it turns out to be."

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My friend did just that and, although he didn't land the controller's job, he did impress the boss to such an extent that, about a year later, he was appointed assistant controller.

It may be easy for you to "put one over" on the other fellow—once. And unless you spend your time thinking in terms of the other fellow's interests, as well as your own, you may find yourself inadvertently taking advantage of him. Whenever this happens, it's just too bad for *you*.

It's easy for a salesman to yield to the temptation of recommending the "buy" that gives him the largest commission, but if that sale turns out to the disadvantage of the buyer, he's lost a good customer.

A salesman, or anyone else, can study the tricks of the trade and acquire a pleasing personality and persuade others to act, but if the person who acts, later regrets his action, the salesman, or anyone else, has an enemy on his hands instead of a friend.

How We Lose Confidence in Unguarded Moments

All of us have our unguarded moments—moments when we forget to use what we know, moments when we make careless statements and perform thoughtless acts which are unworthy of us. And it's in these unguarded moments that we can destroy the confidence of others that has taken us months or years to build up.

WATCH YOUR HUMAN RELATIONS

Over the Christmas holidays I saw a striking example of how a little unimportant occasion was sufficient to weaken a high-confidence relationship between a rising young executive and his boss.

The company was having a Christmas party. The main work for the year was done. Everyone was in the holiday spirit. The boss himself was serving cocktails. This young executive felt like relaxing. It seemed like the time to relax. And it was. But this fellow overdid it. He took a few drinks too many.

After all, we know that it is part of the duties of a host to see that his guests are well served and enjoy themselves. Offering another helping of turkey or another drink is a courtesy. We don't have to take the host's "insistence" at face value, and the person who does is likely to wind up with the reputation of being a glutton or a drunkard.

We all know people like that. The morning after this company celebration I just told you about, I overheard the following conversation in the men's room between "two of the boys."

"How'd you like the party, Chuck?"

"I thought it was swell! But jeez, didn't Joe make a fool of himself?"

Yes, at every company party or celebration, it seems that there's always at least one person who makes a fool

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of himself. The important point for us is to be sure that we are never that person.

Of course, there are other ways in which we may lose confidence in unguarded moments.

"One dirty joke was enough to shatter my confidence in that man," a chief executive told me. "He was at our home for dinner and during the after-dinner conversation, he told a story that embarrassed a few of the ladies. It's not that I'm fussy about such things, but it showed poor judgment and bad taste to tell that story in a mixed group. Now, that one questionable story seems to have affected my confidence in his business judgment in general."

As you know, a story that might be perfectly acceptable among a group of men or even a group of women, can reflect poor judgment in a mixed group of both men and women.

It's a natural inclination in all kinds of story-telling bees to permit ourselves to be lured into the common error of "going the other fellow one better." Someone invariably starts the ball rolling by telling a story that's just a "teensy-weensy" bit off-color, and things go from bad to worse until someone winds up with a story that everyone wishes he hadn't told.

A story has to be a pretty good story to help you; and it doesn't have to be very far off-color to hurt you.

When in doubt, don't tell it.

When we consider that our whole future is so largely

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dependent upon our relations with other people, and that we actually have it in our power to step up these human relations, it seems kind of silly for anyone to postpone such improvement for a single day.

And so, if you will begin today to avoid the common mistakes in human relations which we have covered in this chapter, if you will take the time and the patience to open the minds of those who oppose you by helping them to be right, if you will prove that you are worthy of the confidence of others by thinking of their interests as well as your own, and if you are careful not to lose that confidence in unguarded moments, your relations with other people will immediately become more pleasant and more productive, and it will be much easier for you to progress in your chosen field.



CHAPTER VII



IF YOU'RE UNDER 35

IF YOU'RE UNDER 35 YEARS OF AGE, YOUR PRIMARY AND immediate objective in your chosen field is to build a salable background. How much money you make during this period is not nearly so important as whether you are gaining salable education and experience.

Of course, if you're a professional athlete or a show girl or anything else which calls for the physical strength or beauty of youth, peak earning years may come before you're 35. But for most men and women, peak earning years come later, from 35 to 55.

While it is true that the general reputation of the schools you attend and, later, the companies and the people you associate with, have much to do with the salability of your background, yet it is important to realize that just going to good schools, then getting a job with a good company, are not enough.

You can't build a salable background in any field by just taking on a job and following directions and being punctual and faithful and a hard-working employee.

That's a lot of horsefeathers.

You've got to do something unusual to get favorable

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attention. And one of the simplest way for anyone to gain recognition and advancement in any job is to develop a reputation for being a person who has "good ideas."

It's simpler than you think!

The world is full of good ideas. Some people, of course, are always popping up with them. But even the most unimaginative person gets a good idea once in a while.

Nearly everyone has hit on a better way of doing something or other, but, with most of us, our ideas, no matter how good, are soon forgotten and our plans somehow never seem to materialize.

Every time I get to talking on this subject of good ideas, two questions are sure to come up:

1. Just how does a person go about thinking up ideas?
2. Once you get a good idea, how do you work it out?

How to Get Good Ideas

Whether you get ideas or not, depends entirely on your attitude toward problems.

No matter where you go, you find that men and women divide themselves into two main groups:

1. Those who, when confronted with a problem, immediately run to the boss with it.
2. Those who look upon a problem as something to be solved and who go ahead and solve it.

Those in the second group get a lot of good ideas; those in the first group do not.

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I know a production director who's one of the best in the business. He's been a problem-solver from away back. Years ago, when he was just an errand boy around the factory, a swinging door that separated two drafting rooms on the second floor, was broken and he was told to "get a carpenter to fix it up."

He surprised everyone around the place by suggesting that the door be removed. There was no good reason for having a door there so it was taken down. It's just that no one had ever thought of such a thing before.

Starting with little problems like that, he gradually tackled bigger problems and solved them. On his first job on the factory floor, he made suggestions that simplified the operation of a labeling machine. Later, he made suggestions that broke two bottlenecks on a production line. He's been solving problems ever since. I guess that's the reason he's the factory boss today.

The controller in one of the largest corporations in America was chief clerk just a few years ago. The first idea he ever got as a clerk was "that the number of copies on orders could be reduced from six to four." Once this suggestion was adopted, he found himself actively trying to figure out other ways to improve office routine. In one year's time he had streamlined the correspondence routine by introducing the use of "pattern" letters to cover common inquiries, requests, and complaints. Studying for his C.P.A. at night, he began to simplify reports in the ac-

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counting department, so that information was supplied to management earlier in the month than it had ever been available before. No wonder they made him controller!

The trumpet player for a leading dance band began to make suggestions concerning the handling of business routine, and the first thing he knew, he was business manager of the band.

I know of no business, art, trade, or profession that isn't hungry for men and women who can face a problem, think it through, and come up with the right solution.

As the president of one company told me, "I'm training a man right now to take over an important job. Whenever he comes to me with a problem, I invariably ask him 'What do you think?' His answers are improving every day. As soon as he's able to come up with the right solutions on practically all these problems, I'll know he's ready to take over the job."

Any executive will tell you that most of his people just go through the motions of doing a job. They do what they have to and no more. Even if a good idea does occur to them, they don't bother to do anything about it. Whenever a problem arises, they just let somebody else solve it.

Whenever you see a person who does a good job, who assumes a problem-solving attitude toward that job and constantly thinks of better ways of doing it, who passes on the fruits of his thinking to his boss, you can bet your bottom dollar that that person's going to get someplace.

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No matter where you work, you'll get a lot of good ideas if you'll:

1. Start with the little everyday problems. When something goes wrong on the job, see if you can figure out what to do about it.
2. Get into the habit of going to the boss with your suggested solution to a problem, instead of just dumping the problem into his lap.
3. If your solution is no good, find out what's wrong with it, so you can do better the next time.

Anyone who gets enough practice solving the little problems, will, sooner or later, be able to solve the big ones. Big ideas are usually a lot of little ideas rolled into one.

How to Develop Your Ideas

Most of the little ideas for solving everyday problems are thought up on the spur of the moment and acted upon almost before you can say "Jack Robinson." But when you get hold of a big idea, it's wise to give it all the time and thought it deserves.

Jim Martin, foreman in the assembly room in an electric fan factory, had had a lot of practice solving little problems. But one evening, as he sat on the porch after supper smoking his pipe, he got an idea for solving one of the biggest problems in the plant—how to assemble their machine parts in less time.

"I couldn't wait until morning to spring my idea on the

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superintendent," Martin told me. "But fortunately, for me, before the boss came around that morning, I had a chance to take another look at the assembly line and I found out that my idea wouldn't work. The whole thing did start me thinking, though, and I began to study every single move and operation on that assembly line. After a few days, I had spotted three operations which were the main trouble spots. For weeks, I concentrated on those three operations, thinking of several different ways in which they could be simplified and improved on. After trying out a number of ideas in each spot, I finally settled down to the one that worked best. After about six months' work, I had a scheme that was good enough to show the boss. The boss talked it over with the assistant engineer and my plan was adopted."

Everyone who successfully works out a big idea goes through essentially the same three steps, just as Martin did:

1. *Study, first-hand, all the conditions surrounding your problem.* That's what Martin did. His first step was to study every single move and operation on the assembly line.
2. Henry Ford once said that any big problem can be solved a lot easier if you *break your problem up into little problems*. That's what Martin did. His big problem of assembling machine parts in less time was a lot easier to solve when he spotted the three operations which were the main trouble spots.

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3. *Keep trying out different solutions to your problem until you hit on the one that works best.* Again, that's what Martin did. Instead of jumping to any fast conclusions, he took plenty of time—six months no less—to try out a number of different ideas in each spot, before he finally selected the one that worked best.

So, any time you decide to tackle a big problem, don't accept the first idea that happens to pop into your mind. Don't jump to any fast conclusions. Study, first-hand, all the conditions surrounding your problem. Break your problem up into little problems. And keep trying out different solutions to your problem until you hit on the one that works best.

How to Sell Your Ideas to Others

Charles M. Schwab is credited with the statement that "Many of us think of salesmen as people traveling around with sample kits. Instead, we are all salesmen, every day of our lives. We are selling our ideas, our plans, our energies, our enthusiasm to those with whom we come in contact."

In selling your ideas to others, there are three important points to be remembered.

First, present your idea from the other person's point of view. In submitting an idea to your boss, either verbally or in writing, swing *him* into the picture. Show him how your idea helps to achieve the things *he* is interested in. Ask him what *he* thinks about the idea.

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For instance, when you start out by saying "Here's an idea that might save us all a lot of headaches (or save time or break a bottleneck or reduce waste or cut costs)," that's a lot better than "Say, boss I got a great idea. Let me tell you how I worked it out."

Just bear in mind that what your boss is interested in is *results*. He doesn't give a hoot how difficult it was for you to arrive at something worth-while. All he wants to know is what it will do for him and the company.

Second, state your idea briefly and conservatively. In presenting any idea, there's a natural tendency on the part of all of us to be so enthusiastic about our brain-child that we go into a lot of boring details. You know how impatient you get when someone rambles on and on and insists on giving you a lot of particulars that do not interest you in the least. It's well worth-while to think over the presentation of your idea in advance to be sure that all unnecessary details are eliminated.

Another tendency in presenting an idea is to let our enthusiasm run away with us and to oversell the benefits of our idea. No matter how good our idea is, it's far better to be conservative in all our statements of what its adoption might accomplish. *Conservative statements are bound to build confidence.*

Third, keep your mind open to the suggestions of others. Whenever we present an idea, and someone picks on it, our initial inclination is to staunchly defend our idea, with

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the result that we wind up in an argument that gets us nowhere.

It's much more sensible, when someone offers an objection or a suggestion, to open your mind and to help the other fellow to be right. Maybe you can learn something from his objection that will improve your idea. Maybe his suggestion can be incorporated into your plan. Let the other person have his full say.

Briefly then, it will be easier for you to sell your ideas to others, if you'll:

1. Present your idea from the other person's point of view. Show him how *he* benefits.
2. State your idea briefly and conservatively.
3. Keep your mind open to the suggestions of others.

Don't Expect Results Overnight

Last week a clerk in a large national chain organization told me he was "disgusted" with the company. About a month before, he had sent in a suggestion for converting two departments into self-service departments. "I still haven't heard anything from the main office," he told me. "I expected a quick reply and I thought they'd go for it in a big way. I expected to get something out of it."

"Was that the first idea you've ever sent in?" I asked him.

"Yeah."

"Well," I told him, "digging ideas for the improvement

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of your business is something like drilling for oil. The first try isn't always successful. I know a young woman who clerked in a department store for five years before she woke up and realized that she was getting in a rut. She began using her eyes and passing along suggestions. But it wasn't until after fourteen months that one of her ideas really clicked. Now she's head of the returned-goods department."

I've seen so many cases in which a person sends in one or two ideas and then sits back and expects miraculous things to happen because he has an exaggerated conception of the *value* of his suggestions. Sometimes the idea is an old one which someone else had thought of long before. Sometimes the idea is one that would take years to develop and cost thousands of dollars to put into effect. There may be 101 reasons why your suggestion just wouldn't work—reasons you have never thought of.

However, the most important thing you accomplish when you contribute an idea which you think will save money or make money for your company, is that you thereby demonstrate that you are interested in figuring out better ways of doing things and that you are thinking about the future growth and development of your company. And that's the kind of person your company is looking for. That's the kind of person who lands the promotion when promotion time comes around.

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Keep Sending 'Em In

Every time you send a constructive suggestion to your employer, you remind him that you're not just going through the motions on your job, but that you're using your brains, too. It's the simplest way in the world to let him know that you are interested in your job, in your future, and in your company's future. And if you keep sending them in and reminding him often enough, something is bound to happen sooner or later.

Some time ago, I had a long talk with a gas station attendant who wanted to get into the sales promotion department of his company.

"There ought to be occasional openings there," I told him. "And there's no reason why you shouldn't fill one of them—if you can show them that you can give them what they need, and that you can think the way a sales promotion man should think. Don't you ever get any ideas on the job?"

"Sure I do. Get 'em all the time."

"What do you do with them?"

"Why, nothing—forget 'em, I guess."

"Well, there's your answer," I said. "Every time you get an idea for a new way to sell gas and oil or accessories, or to offer better service, send it in to the sales promotion department."

"Aw—I did that. I sent 'em an idea—oh, two years ago

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now. But nothing ever came of it. They got guys at headquarters who don't do anything else but think up ways to sell gas and oil."

"Of course they have—and you want to be one of them. You don't expect to get a promotion on the basis of one idea, do you?" I asked him. "People in the sales promotion department have to think every day—not once in two years."

"That's all very well, but I can't think up a great idea every day, you know."

"It doesn't have to be a *great* idea. I know one young man, from Texas, who worked at a gas station in Hollywood. He used his eyes and saw something that thousands of other attendants had overlooked. He saw that nearly every car that came in had dust caps missing on one or more wheels. He made a habit of telling the driver about it and in most cases made a sale. Very often the profit on those caps he sold was more than the profit on the gas that people bought. Now, that isn't a *great* idea. But it's a practical one. And a lot of little ideas like that landed him in the sales promotion department, together with a raise. If you want a main-office job, you've got to show main-office thinking."

Every one of these people I've been telling you about faced the same problem. They liked their jobs, but they weren't getting ahead. But by taking a more active interest in the business, they overcame the obstacles that stood

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in the way of their advancement. I could give you literally hundreds of examples of the same kind, all proving that if you look at problems with the boss's eyes, and suggest practical solutions, the boss will begin to pay attention.

Broaden Your Contacts

Bill Johnson was a struggling young assistant in the sales department of a leading shoe company. Bill worked nights figuring out a new salary and commission plan that had many advantages over the system in use.

He submitted his plan to the sales manager who shot holes through it—turned it down.

Bill was afraid to press the matter any further. He didn't want to make his boss sore and run a chance of being invited to leave.

The plan was forgotten. Months passed.

Then it happened.

Through a good friend, Bill got a tempting offer from another company.

This offer put new life into Bill, gave him confidence in himself.

So he reached into the bottom drawer, dusted off the old plan, went back to see the sales manager, answered all the objections, and "stood up" to his boss.

Having turned the plan down once, the sales manager commented wryly, "Maybe it'll work and maybe it won't. If you're so sure about it, we'll try it out in one territory."

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The test results turned out so favorable that the sales manager finally admitted, "You've got something there," and enthusiastically adopted the plan on a nation-wide scale.

Now, Bill's one of the fair-haired boys in the sales department. He didn't *have* to change his job to get a raise and real recognition. Sometimes it pays to "stick it out" with the same company—providing you make the required progress.

Sometimes, however, you've *got* to change your job to get more money or to broaden your experience and if you try to move without engineering an "offer" in advance, you run a chance of hurting your trading position.

As a matter of fact, you're never on sound ground unless you *always have at least one other employer who is willing to buy your services* if they ever become available.

"But how do you work a thing like that?" I am often asked.

And the simple answer is, "You cultivate those who can either buy your services or recommend you to those who can."

"Yes," you say, "but who are these influential people and how do I get to know them?"

It may surprise you to learn that you already know many of them. In all my years of career counseling, I've found that when a person is approached by someone else with a really attractive job offer, it's usually because he

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was recommended for the job by a former boss or a personal friend.

Yesterday a junior executive I know called me up to let me know he had a "wonderful offer" and was "changing jobs."

I asked my favorite question, "How did it happen?"

"A Detroit wholesaler I used to work for has always thought I had a lot on the ball," this young executive explained. "He mentioned my name to a friend of his and his friend looked me up."

That's the sort of thing that happens to someone every day in the week.

The only reason it does not happen to most of us is that we ignore our old bosses and we neglect our old friends.

When we leave a job, we fail to preserve our good relations with our old boss. We make no effort to keep in touch with him, year in and year out, and to let him know how we're progressing.

When the last day on the old job rolls around, too many make the common mistake of "getting a few things off their chest," or "telling the boss off" on their way out and *really* closing the door!

Whenever I find a skeleton like that in a person's career closet, the first thing I have him do is to look up the old boss he told off, and apologize. The interesting result is that when you go to a former employer and apologize for

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being thoughtless, he's really for you from then on—sometimes more so than if you had never made the mistake in the first place.

But even when you do leave “on the best of terms,” it's easy to forget all about the man you used to work for. One of the commonest things in the world is for a fellow to neglect his old bosses and his friends until he happens to lose his job or get into some kind of jam and needs help . . . quick. Then it's a little late. We cannot *suddenly* revive or manufacture high-confidence relations with people. We must gradually develop and preserve them as a regular planned part of our everyday lives, if we are to enjoy the timely benefits of such relationships.

“Yes,” you say, “but how does one set about reviving these former business connections and forgotten friendships?”

The first thing to do is to get out pencil and paper and write down the names of former business associates, former teachers, and other friends, and then ask yourself, in connection with each name on your list, “How long has it been since I have seen or written this person? Is there any way in which I could possibly serve him?”

There are one hundred and one ways of serving a person.

You can remember his birthday. You can send him a newspaper clipping, or a magazine article, or even a book—something that you know will interest him. You can write him a letter at Christmas time—not just a card, but

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a letter which is much more thoughtful and personal. One of the highest compliments you can pay anyone is to ask him for counsel, and one of the highest honors is to invite him into your home.

Most people can make strategic use of their lunch hour—not only in keeping up contacts with old friends, but also in building new contacts with those who can sponsor their progress careerwise. But instead of spending this valuable time with people from other companies—exchanging ideas and broadening our horizons—most of us just wait until noon time rolls around and then we eat with Joe who sits at the next desk.

Set Your Target at 35

The kind of ideas you get while you're building a salable background will enable you to define exactly what kind of job you're shooting for at 35.

You should also have a specific idea of how much money you want to be earning at 35.

Then, you're in an intelligent position to lay out a plan and a schedule and to check up on yourself at least once a year to be sure you're following your plan and meeting your schedule.

Charlie Harmon decided when he was 26 that he wanted to be an advertising manager in a large national organization. In order to get the required experience, Charlie deliberately planned to spend three years selling printing, three years with an advertising agency, and three years

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selling national advertising space in a good national magazine. He also planned to see to it that his income would reach the \$10,000 mark at 35. With this specific plan and schedule in mind, Charlie proceeded to build contacts and friendships with potential sponsors.

After "serving his time" selling printing and then "sweating it out" in an advertising agency, Charlie got a job selling magazine space, and, at 34 he did such an outstanding job in servicing a large Midwestern advertiser for the magazine he was selling, that this advertiser asked him to come in as advertising manager. He's been going strong ever since.

Glenn Thomas, a struggling young accountant, decided when he was 29, that he would shoot for the job of assistant general manager in a good textile company by the time he was 35, and he wanted an income of at least \$8,500. To get the required experience, he planned to spend three years in a textile mill and three years selling textiles. This he did. At 36, he was making \$11,000 a year as a textile salesman, and when an unexpected break came along, he moved right into the general manager's job with a small textile company at \$12,000.

Chart Your Course Successward

Once you've set your target at 35, you're ready to set up a tentative life plan and to chart your course successward.

In doing so, you will find it helpful to divide your future

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into three main periods—up to 35 years of age, from 35 to 55, and beyond 55.

Your primary vocational and avocational objectives during these three main periods may be defined as follows:

UP TO AGE 35	FROM 35 TO 55	BEYOND 55
<p>Objective #1</p> <p>Your main vocational objective during this period is to build a <i>salable background</i>. A How much you make is not so important as <i>what</i> you are doing, <i>whom</i> you are working with, and whether you are acquiring <i>cashable</i> experience.</p>	<p>Objective #3</p> <p>Your main vocational objective between 35 and 55 is to <i>cash in</i> on your salable experience. These are your peak earning years, and <i>how much</i> you make IS important.</p>	<p>Objective #5</p> <p>Your main objective beyond 55 is to set up your own business which you own lock, stock, & barrel, and over which you exercise complete <i>control</i> so that no one can fire you.</p>
<p>Objective #2</p> <p>In your spare time, your main objective during this period is to build strong sponsorship in your social and business relations and to improve your job abilities through part-time study.</p>	<p>Objective #4</p> <p>Avocationally, during these peak earning years, you should search for some interesting activity that will develop into your own business after 55.</p>	<p>Objective #6</p> <p>Even in this final stage of your life, you need some active avocational interest just to keep you from going stale.</p>

Before you attempt to work out your own answers to the above six objectives, perhaps a few demonstration cases would be helpful.

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Here's how a young newspaper reporter, 31 years of age, who is interested in politics, charted his course successfully:

UP TO 35

Vocation: Try to advance from newspaper reporter to city editor.

Avocation: Courses in newspaper writing and editing.

FROM 35 TO 55

Vocation: Managing Editor of newspaper.

Avocation: Study small-town newspaper properties and how to run them.

BEYOND 55

Vocation: Own and edit small-town newspaper.

Avocation: Local politics.

Here's how a young salesman, 28, who is also interested in bird dogs, charted his course:

UP TO 35

Vocation: Try to advance from dog food salesman to assistant sales manager.

Avocation: Evening courses in sales management.

FROM 35 TO 55

Vocation: Sales Manager for dog food company.

Avocation: Study kennel properties and how to run them.

BEYOND 55

Vocation: Owner of dog kennel—board, breed, handle bird dogs.

Avocation: Sailing

A young woman, 26, charted her course as follows:

UP TO 35

Vocation: Try to advance from secretary in personnel department to personnel assistant.

Avocation: Evening courses in personnel management.

FROM 35 TO 55

Vocation: Personnel Director of women's division of cosmetic company.

Avocation: Plan the organization of women's employment agency.

BEYOND 55

Vocation: Owner of employment agency.

Avocation: Career counsel for women.

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And here's the way a young factory foreman, 29, charted his course:

UP TO 35

Vocation: Try to advance from foreman to assistant superintendent of candy factory.

Avocation: Correspondence courses in production management.

FROM 35 TO 55

Vocation: Production Director of candy factory.

Avocation: Study candy specialties and manufacturing methods.

BEYOND 55

Vocation: Owner of small candy factory.

Avocation: Local boys' club leader.

Now you should be able to go ahead and chart your own course successward. Naturally, the age groups given above are merely rough approximations. How fast you progress is largely up to you. After all, many men and women build a salable background before they are 35, and many are ready to go into business for themselves long before they are 55.



CHAPTER VIII



IF YOU'RE 35 TO 55

IF YOU'RE 35 TO 55, YOU'RE ALREADY IN WHAT SHOULD BE your peak earning years. But this does not mean that it's too late to switch from a job you dislike and do what you really want to do in another field.

No matter what you've been doing, it's always possible to relate much of your past experience to the new field you prefer. In most cases, it isn't even necessary to take a temporary cut in income. And in many cases, it's possible for a person to boost his income when he makes the switch.

One man I know, 43, was making around \$10,000 a year as a customer's man in Wall Street. But he gradually came to hate his job. He liked people—all kinds of people, especially the "underdog." This fondness for people expressed itself in various avocational activities in the local Y. M. C. A. and Boy Scout movement. He was vice-president of his local college alumni association. His desires ran toward human service in a big way.

I suggested that he get into some phase of personnel administration.

He began to look around, talk to his best and most influential friends about the idea, and study the personnel field.

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Within a year, he was offered a job as personnel manager by the president of a company whom he had served well as a customer's man, at the same money he was making in Wall Street. Two years later, he was appointed industrial relations director for the same company at a salary of \$15,000 a year and given complete charge of the negotiation of all union contracts.

A mother of three children, aged 48, whose family was raised, decided it would be smarter to develop her own interests than to spend all her time living in the past and trying to dominate the lives of her children.

She liked children's toys and had a lot of ideas on the subject. So she got a sales job in the toy department of a large department store. Her ideas impressed the buyer and it wasn't long until she became assistant buyer, with a nice increase in salary.

A salesman for a radio station spent four years in the army. When he returned at the age of 38, he soon got fed up with his old job. His interests had broadened out into the general administration field and he began to send in suggestions for improving the operations of the program production department and the general office, as well as the sales department.

Now he's assistant to the president. It's generally whispered around the station that he'll be the next general manager.

The controller of a large textile house, 44, gradually

went stale on the job. He wanted to get into the housing field. This seemed like quite a change to make, and it looked for a time as if he would have to take a licking financially to get into it.

However, when he talked over his desires with the general manager of his company, he learned that the company was planning to build a new plant in a small southern town, together with a model residential development where the employees could live. After the general manager had listened to the ideas of his controller for carrying out this residential project, he put him in charge of the entire development.

I could go on and on with case after case, but they all go to prove the same inescapable truth—that it's never too late to do what you really want to do. In fact, you're just plumb crazy if you don't.

The whole trouble is that as we grow older and acquire responsibilities, we grow more conservative, more opposed to change.

Now it's perfectly all right to be cautious, to figure out every move in advance, and, if necessary, to effect a gradual shift of emphasis from your present job to your chosen field, preparing for the new job avocationally so that you do not experience financial shock when you make the change. But it's a tragic mistake for you to fall victim to negative thinking and to assume that you must go on and on in a job which is real work.

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Beware of Negative Thinking

The world is made up of two kinds of people—negative thinkers and positive thinkers. Those who think failure and those who think success.

Negative thinkers are always looking on the darker side of things instead of the brighter side. Negative thinkers can tell you in detail all the reasons why a thing can't or shouldn't be done; all the disadvantages of doing it. They are inclined to minimize, and in extreme cases, to overlook entirely, all the possible advantages.

Negative thinkers are typically afraid to venture anything for fear "something might happen." The woman who can't make up her mind to learn to drive an automobile because she might have an accident. The barber who told me he'd like to open his own shop, but he can't bring himself up to the point of doing it because he's afraid he "might not make a go of it." The person who can't decide to get on his feet in a meeting and express himself for fear of making a blunder. The woman who wouldn't take a vacation trip because she had a small baby and thought exclusively in terms of the disadvantages of taking it along. The person who bets it will rain for the picnic. The critic who condemns democracy because it is wasteful, inefficient, but who seems to overlook entirely the advantages of the system. The person who is supercritical of other people and who doesn't get along with them, simply be-

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cause he habitually observes their weaknesses and overlooks their good points. The person who always finds something wrong with the food or the service. The man who is afraid of losing his job. The person who criticizes but never compliments. The woman who fears that she is losing her beauty or her husband or her friends. The woman with guests coming in for dinner who thinks "won't it be terrible if the roast doesn't turn out all right," or "what if somebody doesn't like lemon pie." The "wet blanket" at the party who's afraid everybody isn't having a good time. The stay-at-homes, the do-nothings, the crabs, the nervous wrecks, the failures—these are the negative thinkers.

Just recently a man in his forties told me of an opportunity to change his job, work at something he liked better, and improve his earning power. And yet he couldn't make up his mind to move from Altoona to New York, because his mind was so full of negative ghosts.

"You see, I'm in my forties," he explained. "If I were only sure everything would turn out all right, I'd do it. But I've made a lot of mistakes in my life and I can't afford to make another one."

"Well," I assured him, "if you ever amount to anything at all, you're going to make a lot of mistakes. And make no mistake about that! Your greatest mistake has been *inaction* and *indecision*! The only person who makes no mistakes is the person who does nothing. And that's the greatest mistake of all!"

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Think it over. Among your friends—even in your own family—it's the positive thinkers you enjoy being with, the negative thinkers who bore you. The positive thinkers are happier, more alive, more active, more adventuresome. They get things done. They make mistakes, lots of them. But they have enough intelligence to admit and correct their mistakes and they have enough determination to try again. They don't waste their time worrying about a lot of things that never happen.

There are about twenty million meteorites that enter the earth's atmosphere every twenty-four hours, but there is no authenticated record anywhere of a person having been killed by a meteorite. It was Mark Twain who said, "I am an old man and have known a great many troubles, but most of them never happened."

Plan for After 55

Avocationally, your most important objective between the ages of 35 and 55 is to prepare for the years beyond 55. For this is the only way you can guard against the common fears which plague most people between the ages of 45 and 55.

No matter how successful a man or woman may be during the peak earning years, there comes the gradual realization that some day, sooner or later, maybe at 50, maybe at 55, maybe at 60, he will be considered too old for his present job and will be replaced by someone younger.

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Retirement with a comfortable income used to be commonly accepted as the foolproof answer to this haunting fear. But the old-fashioned idea, that a man should make enough money during his peak earning years to retire and do nothing for the rest of his life, no longer makes sense.

In the first place, with the present income tax rate, it is virtually impossible for anyone to put aside enough of his earnings to be able to retire at a reasonable age and continue to enjoy the standard of living to which he has become accustomed. You used to be able to do this some years ago, but as one executive put it, "I'm in the big money now, but I got into big money too late."

In the second place, the whole idea of retirement is psychologically unsound. Whenever any man gets full possession of his time, with nothing to do in it, he usually winds up playing too much, or drinking too much, or smoking too much, or loafing too much, or boring the dickens out of everyone, repeating all the wonderful things he used to do in the good old days.

He may take a trip around the world, but he cannot escape from himself. And even travel without any purpose soon gets pretty tiresome. He misses the prestige which goes with an important position. As one retired executive complained in a New York *Times* advertisement, "I am tired of golf and play, and North and South resorts, and I find my efforts at 'do-gooding' do not keep me keen and interested. I wish again to work, and work hard . . ."

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We have found only one satisfactory solution to this problem.

In order to continue to enjoy both the income and the *prestige which go with an important position*, the successful person must either:

1. Plan to achieve control over his present job so that no one can fire him in his later years, or
2. Devote part of his spare time, during his prime, to a search for some avocational activity, which promises to flower into a vocational activity later in life, over which he can exercise complete control.

The second solution, of course, is the one most available to most people. A careful study of our case histories reveals that any executive's chances of finding a satisfactory activity of his own are immeasurably improved when he takes into account the following points:

1. It is best to select a business in which you can use the abilities you have developed during your peak earning years. For example, we have very few cases in which a "city feller" made good as a farmer later in life. Our most successful cases are those where the person selected a business which he already knew a lot about.
2. Select a business that you can get excited about—one that you believe in, one that satisfies your basic desires to perform a service or to do something worth while. If you can make a "cause" or even a "religion" out of your business, so much the better.
3. Select a business that puts you into everyday relations

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with the kind of people you enjoy. This human relations factor is tremendously important.

4. Select a business in which age and experience are definite assets rather than handicaps.
5. Select a business which lends itself to small-scale operations—one that you can continue to direct with ease as long as you live. A "big" business is likely to become so complicated and burdensome that you might lose the essential control which is a primary requisite.

Here are a few cases chosen at random from our files. They are among hundreds of instances in which successful men and women have found out, during their peak earning years, what kind of business they could go into after 55 and control until they die.

Case No. 1

From 38 To 55

Vocation: Now serves as advertising manager for a book company.

Avocation: Keep on the lookout for products that can be profitably sold by mail.

Beyond 55

Vocation: Owner of small direct-mail advertising agency.

Avocation: Writing articles for business magazines.

Case No. 2

From 42 To 58

Vocation: Now serves as production director of large manufacturing business.

Avocation: Save enough money to make down payment on small factory.

Beyond 58

Vocation: Owner of fly-swatter factory.

Avocation: Experiment with "new product" ideas.

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Case No. 3

From 36 To 52

Vocation: Now serves as sales manager for company selling products to the industrial field.

Avocation: Study other leading products sold to the same industrial field.

Beyond 52

Vocation: Exclusive sales agency in his home-town territory, for his old company's products plus other related products.

Avocation: Raising prize flowers.

Case No. 4

From 40 To 55

Vocation: Now serves as fashion editor for women's magazine.

Avocation: Write children's stories as hobby during evenings and on weekends.

Beyond 55

Vocation: Write magazine articles and children's books.

Avocation: Study the piano.

Men and women like these who intelligently prepare for the later years not only do a better job during their "peak earning years." They lose all fear of "growing old on the job." And they have the satisfaction and the assurance of having a real reason for existence and a real vision for the future later in life.

CHAPTER IX

IF YOU'RE OVER 55

IF YOU'RE OVER 55 AND YOU'RE NOT YOUR OWN BOSS, YOU have no time to lose. You should take immediate steps to prepare yourself to get into some kind of a small agreeable business of your own so that no one can fire you. If you don't, you may get an unpleasant shock any time from now on, and you're almost certain to get such a shock before many years are past.

Just recently, a good friend of mine handed me a letter that he had just received from his boss that very morning.

I opened it up and began reading:

Dear John:

In connection with a general organization shake-up and cut-back, the Board of Directors has decided to discontinue your branch office.

This is a disappointment to me as I know it must be to you.

Because of my high regard for your ability, and my knowledge of the outstanding job you have done for us in all the difficult assignments you have had in the past years, I naturally thought of the possibility of our using your services in some other department of the business.

However, since there appears to be no other opening in the organization where you might fit, it is my unpleasant duty to ask you . . .

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I had read enough. I looked up at John's face and there was an ominous moment that was anything but pleasant. There was a tight grim expression around his lips.

"Looks like this is it," he said, hopelessly. "Looks like the fade-out for me. Where am I going to land the kind of job I've been used to? Who's going to hire a man 57?"

This is not an unusual experience for me. In our career consultations, I find an alarming increase in problem cases among men over 55 years or older who suddenly lose their jobs and find considerable difficulty in trying to get re-located.

There is no real excuse for this unhappy situation.

After all, life is predictable. Every one of us knows that, because of the blessings of medical science and the great advances that have been made in the improvement of our diet, we have a better chance of living far beyond 55, and even well beyond 65, than our ancestors had. In fact, we are fast becoming a nation of older people. In 1850, less than three per cent of our population was 65 or older; by 1950, the percentage will be about 8 per cent; and by 1980, almost 15 per cent of our population will be over 65 years of age.

And yet, most people fail, in their prime, to look forward to the later years and to make adequate preparation so that they anticipate these years with pleasure instead of dread their coming.

However, even though a person fails to make adequate

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preparation for the later years and even though he is fired without warning, as my friend John was, this doesn't mean that he should give up all hope.

I know a widow in St. Louis who, threatened with the prospect of financial hardship in her fifties, decided that she could sell younger men and women on the wisdom of insuring themselves against such risks. She launched herself into the insurance business in that famous week in March 1933, when every bank in the country was closed! It was weeks before she sold her first policy. But before the first year was finished, she had sold more annuity contracts than any salesman in her company.

I know an elderly office manager who suddenly lost his job and after being sore at the world in general for several months, decided to start a small printing business of his own. Beginning with nothing but a mimeograph machine, he soon acquired a hand press, and kept himself busy on small handbill jobs right in his own neighborhood. Now he's doing a nice business.

I know a sales manager who was bewildered after he lost his job at 56. About six months later, however, he telephoned me, wanted to see me right away, and I've never seen a man more excited.

"I've done it!" he exclaimed. "I'm in the travel service business. You know how I love Florida. And you know how nuts I am about fishing. Well, believe it or not, I'm doing business with the tired executives I used to work

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with and know so well. Whenever they get a breather and want to go to Florida, I arrange their whole trip for them—get their transportation, get exactly what they want in hotel reservations, rent them fishing boats when they get there, or take care of anything else they want down there. New York's full of potential customers. I've got all I can handle.

"What a business! . . . And it's all mine! I'm in it for life! You're right—you don't have to fade at 56!"

Even if you're fortunate enough to have enough money to retire, you can't just up and quit.

When the vice-president of a large national organization recently told me he was going to retire, I asked him what he was going to do.

"Oh, I've decided to get myself a little farm away out in the country as far away from American business as I can get, and just sit."

"How much of a farmer are you?" I asked.

"Oh, maybe I'll raise a few things. But even if I do, I won't do any of the work. I don't know anything about farming. I'll try to get a couple to run the place."

"You can't retire like that," I told him. "The Lord won't let you. You can't suddenly let down and do nothing. Many others have tried it. But they didn't live long. A man with your ability must continue to meet new challenges year in and year out, if he's to enjoy himself."

And neither can *you* retire, no matter what your circum-

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stances are. The time to retire is never. When you are your own boss, you can spend as many hours on the job as you wish, as you grow older—depending on how you feel—and you can take a day or a month off whenever you please. But you can never retire and do nothing or just play. You won't enjoy it. You'll die before your time.

All you have to do is to find out what kind of business you can get enthused about—something in which you can make use of your past experience, something that keeps you in touch with the kind of people you enjoy, something in which age is an asset rather than a handicap, something that lends itself to small-scale operations so that you can control it with ease as long as you live.

The man who owns a small weekly newspaper and print shop, the woman who teaches piano and voice, the man who runs a hunting lodge in Canada, the woman who runs a beauty supply business, the man who acts as a business consultant specializing in retail store advertising devices for large national advertisers, the woman who operates six newspaper routes and who gets a kick out of training boys to become "merchants," the man who breeds, trains, and sells bird dogs, the woman who runs a public stenographic service, the man who operates a golf and driving range in New Jersey in the summer and in Florida in the winter, the woman who runs an employment agency, the man who operates a water-softener business, the woman who is a rare book dealer, the man who operates a small

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direct-mail advertising agency, the woman who runs a small riding academy, the man who operates a nursery—these are among the thousands of people who are having the time of their lives in their later years.

You, too, can completely lose yourself in your own little business—depending on what your interests are. For you, too, the later years can be a succession of glorious adventures in the sunset.

CHAPTER X

LIVING THE LIFE OF REILLY

NO MATTER HOW YOUNG OR HOW OLD YOU MAY BE IN YEARS, the moment you make up your mind to do what you really want to do, you'll begin to avoid work and live the life of Reilly.

And you can go right on living the life of Reilly if you'll:

1. Keep improving your life plan.
2. Keep improving yourself.
3. Keep improving your human relations.

Keep Improving Your Life Plan

Long-range plans are always subject to periodic review, refinement, and revision. As the years roll by, you get to know yourself better, your underlying desires become clearer, and you learn, by trial and error, the easiest ways to achieve your desires.

Once a year, on your birthday or on New Year's Day, it's a good idea to sit down, review what has happened during the previous year, find out whether you're meeting your schedule, and then detail specific and immediate goals for the coming year.

That's what I do every January first. On New Year's

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Day, at 9 A.M., I have an important appointment with myself. Incidentally, that's one reason why I can never over-indulge on New Year's Eve.

It's also a good idea to put this annual review in writing, including full comments on what you have done or failed to do during the past year, a complete statement explaining any revisions in your general program, and a definite schedule covering what you plan to achieve during the coming year and exactly how you're going to achieve it.

This specific definition of your desires from year to year makes them much more certain of fulfillment.

As time goes on, copies of these annual reviews become more and more valuable. You soon find out just how good a planner you are—whether you're inclined to be over-optimistic, over-pessimistic, or sound and realistic. You soon pick up your common mistakes and learn how you can avoid them. You find that your plans become clearer and simpler every year.

When I first sat down to write my plans on New Year's Day, twenty-four years ago, I filled seventeen pages. Last New Year's Day, my plans for the current year were so specific that I was able to write them in three short sentences. My over-all life plan has remained the same for sixteen years.

Yes, these annual reviews of your life plan, reduced to writing, in due time become a vivid historical chronicle

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which reveals the evolution of your whole philosophy of life—what you believe is important, and specifically, what you want to accomplish. And once you know what you believe in and exactly what you want, effortless achievement is certain, for you'll find that you think, eat, sleep, and dream the fulfillment of your desires. All you have to do is to *let* your mind operate while you rest and enjoy yourself. Without being driven at all, your mind easily solves all your problems while you play, or shave, or take a sunbath or just sit down and relax.

As I write this book, I am certainly not working. It's something I want to do so much, something I believe in so deeply, that I can't help myself from writing, and my pencil glides along so easily that it's fun. I just go along for the ride.

Keep Improving Yourself

When you know exactly what you want to do, and you believe in what you're doing, improving your ability to do it isn't much of a problem at all, for you're fully motivated to do the very best job you can.

However, unless you follow a systematic plan for self-improvement, your energies will not be concentrated and directed along the lines which produce the best and fastest results.

If you've got to go back to school and get the formal

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training needed in your field, for goodness' sake, pick the best.

If you take a night school course or a correspondence school course to improve your abilities, don't forget that the man or the woman who gives that course of study is the most important factor to be considered. Does he know his stuff or doesn't he? If he does, study under him; if he doesn't, don't waste your time.

And don't stop with formal courses of study. Find out who has been most successful in your chosen field. If they've written anything, read it. And if they're still alive, don't hesitate to go to see them and ask their help.

Take careful notes on everything you learn, from the written word or from people, first-hand. Use and practice over and over again the best that you learn.

If you're not satisfied with the way things are done in your field, don't squawk about it. Figure out better ways of doing things. No matter what art, business, trade, or profession you're in, you owe it to yourself and to your job to make some constructive contribution.

And that's how to keep improving yourself.

Keep Improving Your Human Relations

Anyone knows that you get further faster and with a lot less effort when you have good friends who are willing to vouch for you and tell others how good you are.

The first job I ever got as a boy, carrying newspapers in

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Pittsburgh, was secured through the sponsorship of a boyhood friend. Ever since I got out of school, every single job I've held has been by invitation—an invitation that was entirely due to the sponsorship of others.

Not long ago I wanted free radio time for educational purposes for five successive nights on the biggest national network available. The sponsorship of an influential business leader opened the minds of those who could give it to me, and the further sponsorship of several business and educational leaders was sufficient to secure fifteen minutes at eleven o'clock every night in the week at no cost.

No doubt you are thinking of many instances in which sponsorship has helped you realize some objective or other. Everyone knows intuitively that it's better to have someone else say you're a great guy than for you to have to say it yourself.

As soon as we realize that our potential use of sponsorship is directly dependent upon the number of people who have confidence in us, we are impressed anew with the desirability of achieving such relationships with as many people as possible.

No matter what your objectives are, as soon as you form the habit of planning the accomplishment of each objective by listing the names of those who might be able to help you achieve your purpose, this habit automatically provides you with the necessary stimulus to extend and to develop your human relations.

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The interesting thing, however, is this. When a person begins to serve others, deserve their confidence, and enjoy their sponsorship, for good business reasons, he soon learns that it's a lot of fun. After all, the one foolproof law of human relations is to give more than you get from anyone.

One of the most beautiful compensations in life is provided by the simple truth that any time you try to serve anyone else, you serve yourself even more.

Unfortunately, most people don't live long enough to learn this.

You would think, with all the general talk about human service and all that's been written on the subject, more people would begin to catch on to all its benefits. But the whole trouble is that most of the talk is merely lip service and most of the literature on the subject is just plain sappy, with the result that very few people seem to understand the real nature of human service and how some men and women *happen* to become engaged in it.

Let's not kid ourselves. No one is *primarily* interested in serving other people. Everyone is primarily interested in *himself* and his own *self-expression*. That's the way man is made. That's the way you are. That's the way I am. Every honest person admits this.

For instance, I am a career counselor.

Why?

Because I'm primarily interested in myself and in doing

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what I want to do, and I enjoy offering career advice more than anything else in the world. In fact, I like it so much that anyone who asks me for career advice is a very wonderful person to me and there's no telling what I wouldn't do for him.

Now, it becomes clear, doesn't it, that I have served a lot of people, *not* because I am big-hearted or philanthropic or primarily interested in human service, but rather because I am doing what I want to do and I get such a terrific bang out of seeing people progress career-wise by following my suggestions, that I lose all track of my own time and effort and go overboard in serving people, *in the process*.

My milk of human kindness can go sour in nothing flat when I'm doing something I do not want to do.

Now, just look around you and you'll find that those who are doing what they want to do are just plumb full of human service; those who are not doing what they want to do are selfish, rebellious, mean, tough to get along with.

In fact, I have never seen anyone yet with a service attitude toward other people who wasn't all wrapped up in what he's doing—and that goes for the foreign missionary, the teacher, the nurse, the inventor, the builder, the farmer, the physician, or anyone else you can think of whose life is devoted to serving the needs of humanity. He

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serves humanity by doing what he wants to do, by expressing himself in his own favorite way.

Now you can begin to understand why I am mildly enthusiastic about the idea that everyone should do what he wants to do. If we ever get all the peoples of the world doing what they want to do, we'll have a world full of people who, in the process, will lose themselves in human service.

Now you can understand why it's so important for you to do what you want to do. For the moment you do, you are automatically motivated to improve your plan of life, to improve yourself, and to lose yourself in serving others. Life suddenly becomes a great adventure and you are literally carried—on the willing shoulders of those you serve—to whatever achievements your heart desires.

Yes, that's the way you can avoid work and live the life of Reilly!



APPENDIX



WHAT IS THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRAIGHT THINKING?

SO MANY READERS OF OUR PREVIOUS BOOKS HAVE INQUIRED, "What is the National Institute for Straight Thinking?" that we make the answer to this question part and parcel of this book. The following facts on the background and present work of the Institute will help you to understand our purpose.

In 1922, while on the research staff at Carnegie Institute of Technology, Dr. William J. Reilly began some early attempts to adapt the organized thinking employed in the scientific laboratory to business and career problems.

Ten years later, these experiments, started at Carnegie, culminated in the origination of twelve simple rules for straight thinking, and in the fall of 1932, Dr. Reilly founded the National Institute for Straight Thinking for the purpose of training men and women to use straight thinking in their business and career planning. The application of these twelve rules to a wide variety of human problems can now be found in the following books by Dr. Reilly—all published by Harper & Brothers: *How to*

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Find and Follow Your Career, How to Improve Your Human Relations, The Law of Intelligent Action, The Twelve Rules for Straight Thinking.

But let's go back.

An Idea Is Born at Carnegie

At Carnegie, Dr. Reilly observed the care and precision with which students in the scientific laboratory followed a certain approved procedure—how they tested their observations, defined their problems, gathered their evidence, and arrived at properly qualified conclusions. But he also noticed that when these same students stepped across the hall from the scientific laboratory to the study of problems in economics or business, they carried little of their orderly procedure with them, and seemed bewildered as to just how such problems should be handled.

Students in the laboratory were taught the scientific methods for analyzing the strength and the weakness of raw materials, in order to determine where these materials could best be used. But they were never taught any scientific methods for the study of their own basic abilities, likes, or dislikes, to find out in what field they could best be employed.

Intrigued by these obvious contradictions, Dr. Reilly began to adapt the scientific procedures of the laboratory to the two fields which interested him most—business and career planning.

In the field of business, he began by making a first-

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hand study of twenty of the nation's leading advertising agencies for the purpose of defining the primary functions of the modern advertising agency so that students of advertising could have a clearer understanding of this type of business organization.

In the career field, he began by asking engineering students at Carnegie why they were there. He found that apparently only a small percentage of these students had made a thoughtful selection of engineering as their life work. For the most part, they had drifted into an engineering course for such reasons as: "they thought engineering was the coming thing," or "their family or friends suggested it," or "they had connections," or "there's good pay in it."

Tracing the history of those who had been graduated, he found that approximately two-thirds of the graduates wound up in lines of work other than engineering. All of which raised the question as to how many had been miscast at the outset in an engineering course.

As a result of these studies, Dr. Reilly began to work on a series of practical career tests which would help a person to cast himself in the right role and make a more intelligent selection of his courses of study.

The Rules for Straight Thinking Are Defined

Later, while on the research staff at the University of Chicago, where he received his doctor's degree in philosophy, and at the University of Texas, where he was as-

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sociate professor of business administration and director of market studies, Dr. Reilly engaged in a comprehensive search of the literature on logic. This search revealed that, while orderly procedures have been followed for years in the pure sciences, yet apparently no one had ever defined the general process of straight thinking in the social sciences; no comprehensive rules had ever been set down to help the student to think straight on problems which involve human behavior.

Dr. Reilly then consulted with a number of outstanding educational leaders on the subject of straight thinking. Among them he found sympathetic agreement that "the whole idea of democratic education is to induce people to think, to think straight if possible, but to think always for themselves."

In all these consultations with logicians, psychologists, and social scientists, the orderly procedure followed in the scientific laboratory for years was used as the basis for the development of simple rules that could be applied safely to problems involving human behavior. Finally, twelve simple rules were defined and agreed upon.

RULES FOR STRAIGHT THINKING

I. Rules for Making Precise Observations

Rule 1. Define the primary facts in connection with your observation, and separate these facts from any opinions or impressions.

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- Rule 2. Analyze the facts, as far as they will permit, from the standpoint of what, when, where, and who.

II. Rules for Defining the Real Problem and Considering Possible Solutions

- Rule 3. Construct a precise and analytical definition of the real problem from the standpoint of what, when, where, and who.
- Rule 4. Keeping the total situation in mind, list all possible solutions that suggest themselves.
- Rule 5. Classify these solutions in order of preference.
- Rule 6. Select the most promising solutions for further examination.

III. Rules for Securing Evidence on Possible Solutions

- Rule 7. Expose yourself to sources of evidence on all sides of the question, rather than confine yourself to sources that give evidence only on one side.
- Rule 8. Appraise the validity of your evidence from the standpoint of its source and the means used for gathering it.
- Rule 9. Guard against the formation of opinions or premature judgments while in the process of examining evidence.
- Rule 10. Keep the mind open and hospitable to new evidence on any side of the question.

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IV. Rules for Drawing Conclusions

Rule 11. Set up a balance sheet on each possible solution, stating your evidence for and against that course of action.

Rule 12. Weigh the relative importance of positive and negative evidence in each case, and draw your conclusion in favor of the best course (or courses) of action to be taken.

The National Institute for Straight Thinking Is Founded

Soon after Dr. Reilly founded the National Institute for Straight Thinking, preliminary test work showed that those most interested in straight thinking are those who need it least—successful business leaders and outstanding young men who are open-mindedly reaching out in the direction of anything that will further improve their thinking and speed up their progress.

Consequently, the first Institute class in "Straight Thinking in Business" consisted of a seminar of twelve leading business executives in New York—presidents, vice-presidents, and general managers. And the first Institute class in "Career Planning" consisted of a group of twelve "able young men in their thirties" who were suggested by these leading executives.

What the Institute Is Doing Today

Today, the Institute continues to fulfill the purpose for which it was originally founded—to train men and women

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to use straight thinking in their business and career planning.

In its business consultations, the Institute has been called upon to guide the organization of new business enterprises, and to solve a wide variety of personnel, marketing, production, and organization problems for many of the largest manufacturers and industries in the United States.

In its career work, the Institute offers a private consultation program on career planning at the adult level, the college level, and the high-school level. Career counseling involves problems that are so personal and confidential that today the work of the Institute consists of individual consultations, rather than formal class work, with chief executives, able young men and women in their thirties, and exceptional younger men and women who come to the Institute for counsel. The Institute has developed, over a period of years, a series of practical career tests which reveal a person's basic abilities, and even more important, his personal like and dislike patterns. His basic strengths and weaknesses are measured in relation to his abilities, his desires, and his human relations. High-school and college students are counseled on their immediate educational programs, as well as their longer-range objectives. Adults are counseled on (1) the building of a salable background, (2) the development of personal sponsorship among potential buyers of their services, (3) the improvement of abilities, desires, and human relations, (4)

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the actual sale of personal services at the right price, and (5) the avocational search for some interest that promises to develop into one's own business beyond the age of 55.

The Institute has recently undertaken the task of collaborating with high schools and colleges in the development and installation of courses of study and educational films in which the twelve rules for straight thinking are applied to (1) career planning and vocational guidance, (2) problems in human relations, and (3) business problems.

The Institute work enjoys the sponsorship of many leading executives and educators. Dr. Reilly's books on business and career planning are now used in a number of high schools, colleges, and universities, and he has been engaged by such educational institutions to lecture on these important subjects.

The Institute work has been featured on all leading radio networks, and the National Broadcasting Company has granted the Institute requested time for its "American Family Forum" Round-Table Discussions.

The work of the Institute has been featured in many leading national magazines, such as *Reader's Digest*, *Look*, *The American Magazine*, *Pic*, *The American Weekly*, *Parents' Magazine*, *American Business*, and *Your Life*.

From time to time, the Institute holds special educational events to which members are permitted to invite their friends.

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